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“What Motivates Employees in Present Day Organizational Settings?” An Indian Perspective

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Abstract:

Motivation acts as a force multiplier. Organizational success cannot happen without employee motivation and organizations need to be aware what motivates employees. While theories stand the test of time along with their share of criticism and/ or inadequacy, this research is aimed to identify what motivates employees in present day organizational settings? Empirical study has identified individual identity, development, importance, empathy and rewards as present day motivational triggers. Organizations aiming to achieve higher employee motivational levels need to evolve human resource policies and practices giving importance to these triggers.

Keywords: Motivation, employee and work motivation, critical motivational triggers

1. Introduction

What lies behind the efforts put in by employees and organizations and drives people in contributing their knowledge, time and effort to organizational success? A hacker creates free/ open source software, goes beyond the normal to develop something different, new and special. Cracking codes are challenging, intellectually satisfying, intriguing and provides intrinsic enjoyment. Karim R Lakhani and Robert G Wolf share that an environment for career advancement, empowerment, trust and challenge at work – extrinsic benefits contributing personal and professional growth are the top rankers. Alongside intrinsic enjoyment; concern, support, importance and creativity through extrinsic factors prove to be strongest and most pervasive drivers (Wolf, 2005). What emerges is that the core of intrinsic motivation is the human need for competence and self determination linked to emotions of challenge and enjoyment. On the other side, extrinsic motivation promoting career advancement and improvement in personal skill sets balance the grid for higher levels of motivation and success. Motivation is a two-dimensional concept; the direction towards the need, one is trying to satisfy and the magnitude, amount of energy being exerted to achieve the need. The latter can be high or low, depending on circumstances. There is a need to bring physical and personal order in such a way that each individual is willing to expend a high degree of energy towards personal and organizational goals, recognizing that this behavior will result in needs being reached and satisfied. Daniel H Pink in his book; Drive: The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us, shares that human beings can't be motivated to work, out of fear or threat and have motivational drives which must be sustained by organizations. Degree to which these drives are sustained is the degree to which employees will be motivated to work (Pink, 2011). Present day knowledge workers look for actions, what is visible and practiced - transparency, policies, practices, structure and above all informal techniques in a learning environment. A. Petroni and P. Colacino suggest organizational policies and reward systems must reinforce and support joint professional enrichment (Colacino, 2008). Barry Salzberg, CEO, Deloitte surveyed millennia from 29 countries. Research brings out that millennia want to; work for organizations with purpose, make better use of their skills, work for enigmatic, visionary leaders and pursue leadership opportunities (Salzberg, 2015). SHRM 2010 quarterly research report on “Motivation in Today’s Workplace: The Link to Performance” suggests technology driven adaptability as key to organizational success. Motivation as an individual and organizational competency is the drive to be pro-active and is not to be treated symptomatically.

A fine balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation can be achieved by alignment of personal and professional goals. Margit Osterloh, Jetta Frost and Bruno S. Frey suggest review and restructuring of organizational forms to motivate employees. A stable dynamics of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation make it endogenous and manageable. Zoltan Dornyei states that metaphors with informal newer and creative techniques are essential during every storming phase engulfed with conflicting ideas (Dornyei, 2005).

2. Review of Literature

“What Motivates?” is an old question, yet puzzles practitioners and academicians equally. Cynthia Schilling says “individuals are complex, so is motivation” (Schilling, 2013). Mike Barker brings out that anybody can provide a reasonable explanation of the motivation of their heads (Barker, 2012); having inspiration to do anything, something and anything or desire, I guess. (Janice Field 2003); desire to do something, having energy, to have the energy to do something, achieve a goal, you might not achieve it, but you’re still motivated. (Arsalan Ahmed 2003), Motivation for me is what makes me want to do something (Jay Van de Wint 2003), [Motivation’s] something that...it’s a drive. It’s connected with inspiration. It’s something that pushes you forward in a direction you want to go (Jacqui Thomas 2003). As simple and unambiguous as these definitions may appear, when it comes to establishing a concise and meaningful definition that stands up to academic scrutiny, all definitions do not meet the challenge. They fail because, in trying to understand motivation, there are too many questions to answer in just one short definition; too many threads to weave because motivation is the way of behaviour, meaning to move (Najmolhoda, 2013). Hellriegel, Woodman and Slocum suggest that internal and external factors are the reasons one has for behaving in a certain way (D. Hellriegel, 1992). Understanding motivation helps combine desires, experiences, external influences and human resource practices to enable organizations articulate motivation; complex and varied. Ian Besell, Brad Dicks, Allen Wysocki and Karl Kepner suggest need to connect with employees, identify and address the driving force (Ian Bessell, 2013). Individuals possess multitude of talent, needs, desires/ expectations in varying intensity. Weiner states, Sigmund Freud, father of psychoanalytic school of psychology, wrote that humans are motivated to act as a result of perceived internal imbalances in the body (Weiner, 1980). Present day environment and demographics merits focused cogitation on all fronts; individual, organization, motivational factors and practices, goals set/ achieved and expectations/ satisfaction attained; both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions, to understand and keep a connect between organization and employees to achieve a higher degree of satisfaction and happiness. Organizations are seeking a perceived competitive edge on motivation for talent retention and performance. Rajeswari Devadass suggests higher workplace motivation encompasses; employee engagement, organizational vision and values – philosophy and appreciation of work well done – coming through overall authentic leadership (Devadass, 2011). Chana Anderson, Director Human Resource through SHRM quarterly research journal suggests motivation is influenced equally by employee and the organization – rule of 50/ 50 (SHRM, 2010). Theories of motivation bring out two contrasting approaches; content theories and process theories (Millins, 1998). Robbins suggests content model fails to examine the process and assumes connection between the needs and behavior so as to be unproblematic (Robbins, 1994). Therefore, motivational theories at best complement each other if not contradict and offer an insight on how to motivate. Richard M. Steers, Richard T. Mowday and Debra L. Shapiro suggests process theories view work motivation from a dynamic perspective and look for causal relationships across time and events in conjunction to human behaviour at workplace (Richard M. Steers, 2004). A motivated workforce therefore has always been a strategic asset and will remain so. Bessell suggests that motivation is an important tool often underutilized in today’s workplace. While every employee is expected to contribute for increase in quantity and quality of organizational output, in doing so, both, the individual and organizational behaviour are important.

As Dongho Kim says, “If you cannot understand, just ask your employees”, for every employee is different and system can be put in place to match up with employee needs because organizational success depends on employee motivation (Kim, 2006). In simple terms, motivation is stimulating someone or one’s own self, to push the right button to get the desired results. In an effort to find the right button, Benjamin Ball through his practical guide on “How to Motivate Your Employees” shares that in the context of motivation having different forms and a wide landscape; it is described as forces acting either on or within an individual to initiate behaviour (Ball). It’s what gets one going. Smith E. Clifford in his working paper report “The Donkey and the Stick: Revisited” representing individual, organization and human resource practices, brings out that the managerial approach of autocratic leadership has outlived its usefulness (Clifford, 1973). Employee motivation requires a systematic approach and cannot be executed piecemeal and/ or intuitively. Employee must be valued and included in all organizational processes. Most of the concerns are here to stay unless organizations know why their employees come on time, work efficiently, stay hooked and productive. Dr T Velnampy shares that employee motivation is a way to take organizations for achieving higher goals. Understanding and building a relationship between organization and the individual is the key (Velnampy, 2012). In all this, workplace motivation is the heart of the matter. Pinder describes work motivation as a set of internal and external forces initiating work related behaviour that determine its form, direction, intensity and duration (Pinder, 1998). Workplace motivation relates to influences, both; organizational compensation system based on nature of work being performed and individual needs and motives - intrinsic forces. C. Schilling also shares that work motivation is complex as it embraces a continuum spread across individuals who want to feel recognized and rewarded, be at best, weigh contributions against expectations, demand values and love for work, escalate organizational development and human resource management practices. Such broad range of influences can be captured by policy makers for better appreciation of motivation to promote employee motivation for individual and organizational growth. Organizations need to communicate the bigger picture - vision and expectations to employees in fulfilling the vision? General concern across all spheres/ sectors has led to research and empirical studies in time and space to connect employees and organizations using motivation as a force multiplier. Managers need to recognize employees with whom they work. In this, more specifically, how to deal with employee motivation in a changing environment has always been very intriguing! Organizations need to fill the gap between what science knows and what business does. Understanding motivation by organizations is important because of performance, reaction to compensation and on-going human resource concerns. Ju-Chun Chien brings out in his research that more companies are regarding their human capital as key to business success and sustainability (Chien, 2013). Challenges and sustaining the processes have been identified as having positive association

with an individual's motivation. Hence understanding motivation for both; individual and the organization is critical in present day organizational settings.

“Where I work, praise is half hearted and always late. I have always been praised weeks after the action. On each occasion, I was one of the last to hear I was being praised as well. My colleagues point out that I had been mentioned on some vague message board that constantly moves. Very rarely does the manager actually praise me in person and rarer still is his sincerity. Motivation is something I seriously lack at work. Not much point in working hard if I don't get any recognition for it.”

Anonymous

U. S. Muogbo shares there exists positive correlation between employee motivation and organizational performance. Extrinsic motivation given to employees has significant influence on employee performance, hence there is a need to continually understand employees within the organizational context and evolve extrinsic motivation parameters (Muogbo, 2013). Zahra and Fatemeh also share that organizations should establish equivalence between personal and professional dimensions; sound merger of an employee and his/ her organization. Motivation will then be outcome of this participation and interaction. David Westman shares that after providing basic packages; salary, traditional benefits, welfare, retirement and profit shares, are there newer alternatives to consider (Westman, 2012)? Google office at Gurgaon, India has come up with a new look in keeping with inadequacy of Herzberg's two factor theory (Evans, 2010). With hygiene factors serving as motivators (Stello, 2001), offices that house a Taj Mahal-like setting that changes colours, meeting places built like a railway coach or an Ambassador car, a work area designed like a Las Vegas casino... idea of workplace is changing rapidly, and moving away from drab, great cubicles and work stations. Google isn't alone, India offices of LinkedIn, Expedia, British Telecom, Unilever IT Centre are all experiments in workplace chic (Sharma, 2014). "The new environment reinforces culture of organization and is attractive to Gen Z. People are happier and that promotes productivity". In another case, a diamond merchant gifted 500 cars and 200 flats besides expensive jewellery as Diwali bonus to 1200 employees in 2014. The bonus was offered for completion of annual targets as a mark of appreciation of work done (Chaterjee, 2014). Employee centric initiatives encompassing personal and professional growth such as; surprise day off, behind the scene recognition, instant cash for ideas, gain knowledge while travelling, regular developmental formal and informal training, role play, common interactive tea sessions, family orientation programs, abroad trip, family dinner coupons, charity days and casual dress program day few benefit build better employee – organization relationship which leads to strategic advantage. Human Resource amongst all resources needs to work for retention of efficient and motivated workforce in the overall performance of organization. Rizwan Qaiser Danish and Ali Usman share that human resource processes and practices are continually being rated for delivering in this new age of globalization. New age, with complexity on both fronts; organizational commitments and individual needs and desires demands a fine integration. Human Resource will always remain a unique capability for attaining this competitive edge (Usman, 2010). Factors such as; achievement, growth, promotion opportunities, work by itself, recognition, interpersonal relations, compensation and security have been identified as trend setters. Sorasak Tangthong, Jirasek Trimetsoontron and Nutthawut Rojniruntikul share that human resource practices will have a significant indirect and positive effect on organizational performance. Motivated employees are less likely to leave organizations and efficient human resource functions will motivate employees to do better (Sorasak Tangthong, 2014). Being global and complicated, motivation demands continual research and innovation to support ongoing improvements in strategy and 'employee-to-organization' synthesis. Irrespective of industry, human resource needs to connect laterally and vertically; be in touch with what is important to employee and organization to foster a motivated workplace based on trust, recognition and acknowledgment. As a hypothetical construct, motivation is an indicative of what energizes, directs and sustains behaviour. James L. Perry and Lyman W. Porter suggest four major categories; individual characteristics, job characteristics, work environment and external environment respectively (Porter, 1982). The individual – organization mismatch needs to be bridged. To tide over the gap, human resource needs to evolve practices to bring organizations closer to individuals.

3. Objectives of Study

Researchers have studied motivation in different ways and hence many theories, categories, definitions, orientations and paradigms of motivation. Margit Osterloh, Jetta Frost and Bruno S. Frey in their research paper on “The Dynamics of Motivation in New Organizational Forms” discuss the impact of dynamics of motivation on new organizational forms to forge value, creating knowledge transfers in teams and organizational functions (Margit Osterloh, 2002). In this back drop, objectives of the paper are:-

- To explore knowledge worker motivation, workplace motivation and organizational success in present day organizational settings.
- To identify critical motivational triggers in present day organizational settings.

4. Research Design and Methodology

Descriptive research design method has been used to identify critical motivational triggers in present day organizational settings. Population for research composed of employees working at junior and middle level. Non probability convenient sampling method has been adopted along with primary and secondary data. Self administered questionnaire consisting of two parts was designed and developed. Part I was based on conceived research frame work “what motivates employees in present day organizational setting” on a five point Rensis Likert scale. This was examined through a total of 28 items. Part II comprised of demographic data. A total of 174 responses were received. IBM SPSS version 20 was used for statistical analysis. Cronbach's alpha value measured was .961 suggesting and confirming reliability of measures.

5. Analysis and Discussion

The sample comprised of people working at junior and middle level across various organizations. The responses were subjected to statistical analysis using mean, standard deviation, t-test and factor analysis to identify motivational triggers in present day organizational settings. The mean scores are placed under Table 1. One sample T test was conducted to test hypothesis; there are no significant employee motivational triggers in present day organizational settings. Results were found to be statistically significant ($p < .001$) and are placed under Table 2. Results confirm that employee motivational triggers exist and are essential for individual and organizational growth and development. Factor analysis with principal component extraction was applied with varimax rotation to understand factor loadings across variables. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) for sampling adequacy and Bartlett's sphericity test was also conducted. The objective was achieved by a set of 28 items. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was measured as .892 which is above .5 (acceptable limit). This shows that the questionnaire has appropriate items. Chi-square value of Bartlett's test of sphericity was measured significant (chi-square = 4127.348, $df = 378$, $p = .000$) indicating that the factor analysis is acceptable. Total variance explained for five factors measured is 70.216 % (cumulative). From a total of 28 items, five factors have been derived; individual identity, individual development, individual importance, empathy and rewards. *Individual Identity* – sense of identity, the I factor; self worth strengthens self concept boosts self esteem and people want to do well. Purpose, identity, belief and responsibility, make people feel competent to perform challenging tasks. *Individual Development* – people contribute significantly to organization's success when offered with learning opportunities for developing personal and professional skills and this leads to a connect with the organization. *Individual Importance* – feeling of being significant, valued and empowered leads to increased efforts and acceptance of responsibility. Sense of importance translates purpose and ability into action. *Empathy* – concern and acceptance of feelings and emotions builds trust, confidence and a psychological connect to elevate performance. *Rewards* – people want to be rewarded for good work. Rewards lead to a significantly higher level of effort and performance. Organizations therefore need to invest in people and keep them motivated for higher efforts and performance resulting in organizational success. The rotated component matrix scores are placed under Table 3.

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	No of Items
Item Means	3.378	2.828	4.345	1.517	1.537	.081	28
Item Variances	1.095	.412	1.569	1.156	3.805	.069	28
Inter-Item Covariances	.512	-.193	1.106	1.299	-5.731	.053	28

Table 1: Mean Scores summary item statistics

Items	Test Value = 0						Sig/ Not Sig
	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
					Lower	Upper	
Good physical working conditions at workplace motivate me	89.268	173	.000	4.34483	4.2488	4.4409	Sig
My personal values and beliefs do not coincide with organizational values and beliefs and hence I have to keep my principles aside to execute assigned tasks	42.204	173	.000	3.06897	2.9254	3.2125	Sig
I have a sense of ownership for my organization	39.267	173	.000	3.72414	3.5369	3.9113	Sig
In my organization, my superiors "walk the talk" – they practice what they preach	48.556	173	.000	3.43678	3.2971	3.5765	Sig
I work for the end result without expecting any rewards	36.561	173	.000	3.47126	3.2839	3.6587	Sig
Leadership is practiced in my organization with a good intent	37.432	173	.000	3.19540	3.0269	3.3639	Sig
I am encouraged to be creative in my organization	43.775	173	.000	3.40230	3.2489	3.5557	Sig
I am encouraged to be innovative in my work	40.469	173	.000	3.41379	3.2473	3.5803	Sig
I see good interpersonal relations in my organization	38.235	173	.000	3.22989	3.0632	3.3966	Sig
Time, space and resources available for goal accomplishment are unrealistic in my organization	36.482	173	.000	2.82759	2.6746	2.9806	Sig
Transparency and fairness is practiced in my organization	42.956	173	.000	3.26437	3.1144	3.4144	Sig
I am happy to work in my organization because of good policies and practices	37.958	173	.000	3.40230	3.2254	3.5792	Sig
I have clarity of goals/ objectives in my work	40.686	173	.000	3.50575	3.3357	3.6758	Sig
Personal influence by my superiors motivates me	41.589	173	.000	3.27586	3.1204	3.4313	Sig
My organization helps in alignment of personal and organizational goals for improved individual performance	39.630	173	.000	3.35632	3.1892	3.5235	Sig
I have freedom to display leadership in my organization	40.778	173	.000	3.28736	3.1282	3.4465	Sig
My superiors know what motivates me and they keep motivating me at regular intervals	43.017	173	.000	3.03448	2.8952	3.1737	Sig
I work for the end result and expect instant rewards and	35.522	173	.000	2.96552	2.8007	3.1303	Sig

recognition for my work							
Empathy is practiced in my organization	46.495	173	.000	3.14943	3.0157	3.2831	Sig
I have job stability in my organization	41.411	173	.000	3.79310	3.6123	3.9739	Sig
My salary is commensurate with my job content	39.442	173	.000	3.37931	3.2102	3.5484	Sig
I get enough opportunities for personal growth in my organization	50.739	173	.000	3.44828	3.3141	3.5824	Sig
I get enough opportunities for professional growth in my organization	48.327	173	.000	3.41379	3.2744	3.5532	Sig
My organization provides good indoctrination and training programmes for all employees	54.286	173	.000	3.57471	3.4447	3.7047	Sig
I have a sense of identity in my organization	42.181	173	.000	3.56322	3.3965	3.7300	Sig
My superiors keep track of my job content and enrich me at regular intervals, helping me develop	44.587	173	.000	3.28736	3.1418	3.4329	Sig
I have autonomy at work in my organization	44.680	173	.000	3.31034	3.1641	3.4566	Sig
I have authority and responsibility in my area of work	42.655	173	.000	3.47126	3.3106	3.6319	Sig

Table 2: One-Sample Test

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Good physical working conditions at workplace motivate me	.712				
My personal values and beliefs do not coincide with organizational values and beliefs and hence I have to keep my principles aside to execute assigned tasks				.877	
I have a sense of ownership for my organization	.672				
In my organization, my superiors "walk the talk" – they practice what they preach	.628	.420			
I work for the end result without expecting any rewards	.665				
Leadership is practiced in my organization with a good intent	.494	.522			
I am encouraged to be creative in my organization	.484	.502			
I am encouraged to be innovative in my work	.536	.553			
I see good interpersonal relations in my organization	.501	.585			
Time, space and resources available for goal accomplishment are unrealistic in my organization					.857
Transparency and fairness is practiced in my organization	.455	.462			
I am happy to work in my organization because of good policies and practices			.758		
I have clarity of goals/ objectives in my work		.463	.600		
Personal influence by my superiors motivates me	.470	.497			
My organization helps in alignment of personal and organizational goals for improved individual performance			.779		
I have the freedom to display leadership in my organization	.449		.574		
My superiors know what motivates me and they keep motivating me at regular intervals		.842			
I work for the end result and expect instant rewards and recognition for my work					.790
Empathy is practiced in my organization			.474	.524	
I have job stability in my organization	.738				
My salary is commensurate with my job content	.734				
I get enough opportunities for personal growth in my organization	.413		.643		
I get enough opportunities for professional growth in my organization	.456	.590			
My organization provides good indoctrination and training programmes for all employees	.406	.635			
I have a sense of identity in my organization	.759				
My superiors keep track of my job content and enrich me at regular intervals, helping me develop		.599	.465		
I have autonomy at work in my organization	.534		.576		
I have authority and responsibility in my area of work	.623		.447		
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.					
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.					
a. Rotation converged in 10 iterations.					

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix Score

6. Conclusion

Motivation acts as a force multiplier. Organizational success cannot happen without employee motivation and organizations need to be aware what motivates employees. There is a need to value every employee and create; individual identity, importance and development backed with empathy and rewards for employee motivation. Least opposed is the fact that a motivated person is always willing to expend energy to achieve organizational goals. This is a win - win situation. Effective and efficient human resource practices create a people – process balance; hybrid of integral (intrinsic) and acquired (extrinsic) motivation. Organization's need to analyze their spectrum of organizational structure and culture to determine how personal and professional growth can be fostered; mantra to be - "Catch them young, motivate them to grow."

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