Measuring employee motivation levels in an educational organization

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the motivation levels of employees of an educational institution. Employee motivation levels tend to have an influential impact on performance levels of the workforce as well as the success of the organization. The employees have ranked twenty factors of motivation on a constructed questionnaire and the results have further been interpreted in order to move beyond the usual ways of using pay as a motivating factor and suggesting better ways in order to keep the workforce motivated, keeping in mind the organizational policies of the institution.

Keywords— *Employee motivation, Factors, Questionnaire, Results*

1. INTRODUCTION

Motivation as a process accounts for an individual's intensity, direction and persistence of effort towards attaining a goal (Robbins, 2001). In essence, it defines motivation as the process where an individual is focused and works hard in line with the organizational long consistently in order to be called or to be said to be motivated. As an element, it is one which keeps the workforce motivated, at work in order for any organization be it in any sector of the economy to be efficient as well as successful.

On doing an extensive literature review, it was found that there have been various theories of motivation which have been developed after years of empirical research on the basis of which various organizations have been working on. There are various distinctions on the basis of which these motivation theories are built on, some of which being need theories and some being achievement theories. The basis of needs theories was built by Murray's and his distinction of various needs. Abraham Maslow further built on his concepts and introduced his Theory of Needs which ranged from lower level needs to higher level needs. The lower level needs consisted of physiological needs, safety needs and needs of belongingness and whereas the higher-level needs consisted of esteem needs and self-actualization needs. Physiological needs were the biological needs which consisted of the needs of hunger, water, sleep and sex. Safety needs were the needs to feel secure so in an organizational sense, job security. Needs of Belongingness were the needs to be feel loved and cared about and having a safe and loving relationship and friendship with coworkers. Once these needs are satisfied only then can the employee move to higher level needs, according to his theory, the needs are in an hierarchy and thus one needs to be satisfied in order for the latter to be satisfied. Esteem needs are the need to feel their status and achievement in a sense their recognition which can be achieved through praise to keep employees motivated at their workplace. At the top of the hierarchy is the need for self-actualization which is the need to believe that they can reach their true potential and is subjective to what people believe what makes more of them, in order to keep people motivated at this level, a challenging job will be a good factor.

McClelland introduced another theory on the basis of learning and not a hierarchy which was invariant depending on the person. The theory accounted for three needs, primary being the need for achievement which was the drive to excel and achieve a particular set of standards established in a relationship. People high in this need tend to be motivated when the probability tends to be 50%, there is moderate risk involved Jand when they are highly involved in the task. Further, need for power and need for affiliation also tend to play a role. Need for power is the desire to make others behave in a way in which they otherwise would not and the latter is the desire to develop close interpersonal relationships at their workplace. These together make not only a successful manager who is driven to success but also a manager who is constantly motivated and keeps his workforce motivated due to a close knit of interpersonal relationships.

Herzberg's Two Factor theory, also known as the motivation-hygiene theory talks about the intrinsic job motivation factors as well as the extrinsic job motivation factors. Motivation factors are the intrinsic job motivation factors and hygiene factors are the

extrinsic job motivation factors. According to his theory motivation is related to job satisfaction the two exist on a continuum scale where the opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction and the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction, which has been a different approach to the concept of motivation than the earlier researchers.
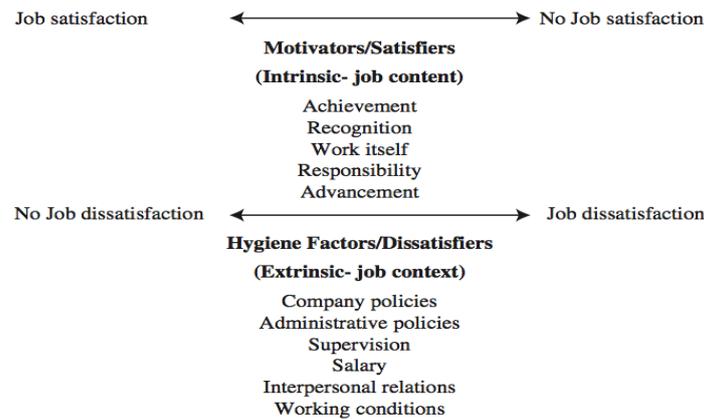

Job satisfaction ←————————————→ No Job satisfaction

Motivators/Satisfiers
(Intrinsic- job content)

Achievement
Recognition
Work itself
Responsibility
Advancement

No Job dissatisfaction ←————————————→ Job dissatisfaction

Hygiene Factors/Dissatisfiers
(Extrinsic- job context)

Company policies
Administrative policies
Supervision
Salary
Interpersonal relations
Working conditions

Fig. 1: Two Factor Theory Model

Locke's Goal Setting Theory as proposed states that specific goals which are accepted tend to motivate individuals more when they are more difficult. Further when individuals are given constructive feedback and not constant criticism, they generally tend to be motivated to achieve their goals. It is also further beneficial for the management to set the goals by managerial objectives and then involve the employees and the workforce to make revisions to their goals in order to grant them their autonomy and freedom in setting their own goals and further avoiding conflict in setting goals which can also result in malfunctioning of the organization. Employees need to also be committed to their goals in order to be motivated and should be rewarded spontaneously but not all the time in order for their workforce to increase output.

The aim of the study is to understand the motivating factors of an educational organization which requires a high level of responsibility and selflessness. Indeed, motivation is a very subjective personal trait, however, it is one which affects not only psychologists but every sector of the economy. It aims to discover which aspect of motivation drives people to excel the most and can be worked upon to make the organization more efficient and to increase performance and output overall.

2. METHOD
2.1 Participants
The sample of 35 participants who were currently working in an educational organization were selected. The data were collected manually after an invitation was sent over an email to the supervisor who then further spoke to her team. Informed consent was established before the questionnaire was conducted with the selected sample. The range of work experience of the selected sample was 26 years and the average work experience for the sample was 5.84.

3. MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES
A questionnaire was constructed based on various well-established motivational theories laid down by Herzberg, McClelland, Locke, Stacy and Vroom was implemented. The questionnaire was tested for standardization, validity as well as item analysis was conducted with a sample of 50 participants .The questionnaire tested motivation levels on a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 being very demotivating, 2 being demotivating, 3 being not being able to decide if it is motivating or not, 4 being motivating and 5 being very motivating. The questionnaire tested motivation level based on 20 factors namely; Relationship with Supervisor, Relationship with Coworker, Organizational Policies, Working Environment, Pay, Organizational Status, Security , Achievement, Recognition, Job Itself, Responsibility, Advancement, Growth Opportunities, Job Autonomy, Goals set by Self, Goal set by Supervisor, Feedback, Rewards, Leadership and the Need to Work. These factors were used in order to check applications of specific theories of motivations and to further check the locus of control being internal or external for the selected sample. The questionnaire was implemented on the sample manually in the organization in the conference room after briefing the participants. Once collected, questionnaires were analyzed by calculating the total scores, means and ranks were allotted to the factors based on the mean values. The data was used in order to formulate results for the study as well as suggest future interpretations for the organization in order to make the workforce and the organization function more effectively.

4. RESULTS
The results were tabulated and table 1 indicates the total scores, means as well as rankings of the motivational factors according to the selected sample. As can be seen from the table the highest motivating factor has been the Working Environment which has been ranked first with a mean of 4.46 and the lowest has been the Goals Set by the Supervisor which has been ranked twentieth with a mean of 3.71. All scores are reflected in Table 1 and are further graphically represented along with their ranks in Figure 1. The dimensions along with motivation factors were scored were explained as
- **Relationship with Supervisor:** The relationship that employees share with their supervisor which is dependent on not only their supervisor's personality and leadership style but also the employee's themselves and their way of working. This according to the prior theories is directly related to the motivation levels and has an influential effect as well.
- **Relationship with Coworkers:** The relationship that employees share with their coworkers influences the social support that they gather in their workspace which too has a direct relationship with their motivation levels.

- **Organizational Policies:** The policies of the organisation levels influences the workplace behaviour at all levels as well as the goals that are laid down by the employees along with the procedural working and profit output.
- **Working Environment:** The working conditions in the organization for the employees which include the physical environment as well as the emotional environment gained from their relationships.
- **Amount of Pay:** Salaries of the employees.
- **Status:** The status of the organisation as well as of the employee in the organisation.
- **Job Security:** Assured future at workplace
- **Achievement:** The desire for one excels at what they are doing.
- **Job Recognition:** The praise gained from their coworkers as well as supervisors, closely related to rewards as well.
- **Job itself:** The nature and the job itself.
- **Responsibility:** The responsibility assumed by the employee of their job and tasks appointed to them by their supervisor.
- **Advancement:** The opportunity to grow in terms of promotion at workplace.
- **Growth Opportunities:** The chance to learn something new advance in skills.
- **Job Autonomy:** The level of freedom granted to make their own decision in terms of task role, procedural decisions and goal setting.
- **Goals set by Self:** The goals set by one for themselves in line with organizational policies.
- **Goals set by Supervisor:** The goals set by their supervisor for their employees.
- **Feedback:** The feedback provided to an employee by their supervisor or their leader continually or as and when required.
- **Rewards:** The bonuses are it tangible or intangible given to one at their workplace.
- **Leadership:** The leadership opportunities granted at one's workplace.
- **Need to Work:** The sheer need to work for satisfying basic necessary needs.

On analyzing the data, it can be inferred that the factors which are of high importance in terms of motivation to the employees are the; Work Environment, Relationship with Supervisor, Goals Set by Self, Relationships with Coworker, Autonomy, Need to Work and Organizational Status. These factors which were rated as highly motivating by the employees, most of which are categorized by Herzberg as Hygiene factors which serve as satisfiers in the workplace. If these factors like the working environment, interpersonal relationships with coworkers as well as the supervisors and the organizational status are high then people are said to be satisfied with their job which in the study can be inferred. It can further also be inferred that since it has enabled the employees to concentrate on what motivates them as indicated by the employees by their ratings on the questionnaire. Further, both Autonomy and Self Set Goals are highly motivating for the employees working in the organisation which can be explained by not only Herzberg's approach but also Locke's Goal Setting Theory. On analyzing the data, it was found that both the Job Itself and the Responsibility of the job is of moderate importance in terms of motivation and these two factors according to prior research play an important role in job enrichment which lead gaining new learning and expertise, communication with authority and even personal accountability. The employees have rated self-set goals and autonomy has highly motivating which indicates that presence of adequate amount of satisfaction, it is necessary for the organisation to give adequate amount of freedom for it's employees to set their own goals in accordance to the company policies and then further work towards accomplishing them. Since pay has been ranked 19th, it indicates that it fails to motivate them at work, however, this is in contradiction to the fact that the need to work has been ranked 5th.

Participants have further ranked Recognition, Achievement, Policies and Security as moderately motivating which indicates the presence of not only a motivated workforce but also a satisfied workforce according to Herzberg. Achievement ranks 11th for the employees of the organisation which indicates a need for achievement in the words of Mc Clelland. This is also intertwined with their drive for autonomy as well as well as self-set goals which drives them to excel and achieve a higher set of standards for the organisation. Job Security as well ranks 11th which to indicates the need for safety advocated by Maslow which motivates individuals to work. Since these factors do motivate the employees to work and don't act as a demotivator it indicates that employees do indeed have certain needs which need to be satisfied before they move on to being praised for their work and rewarded. Although Growth Opportunities and Advancement have been ranked 15th and 17th respectively on being asked it was found that the opportunities are extremely limited because of which they did not find these two particularly motivating.

Rewards, Pay and Goals set by the Supervisor have ranked the lowest which indicates an internal locus of control of the employees. These employees do not require just tangible rewards to be motivated but rather exhibit intrinsic motivation. Rewards and Pay for many have been either a neutral factor or a demotivating factor which indicates the presence of job satisfaction when it comes to compensation plans and thus it fails to motivate the employees. In addition, Goals set by the Supervisor is in line with their need for autonomy and it being a driving force at work.

5. DISCUSSION
As expected, the data does not just reflect one theory of motivation, rather gives mixed results as stated above. The employees exhibit an internal locus of motivation rather than an external locus of motivation which indicates the importance of intangible rewards as a motivating factor for the employees. The working conditions have been ranked first which indicates the presence of a positive work environment which boosts the intrinsic motivation of an employee, which in the case of the organisation stands true. Further, there is a risk of incompatibility of goals since the employees have rated the goals set by their supervisor as demotivating which indicates a potential cause of conflict. Since feedback also has a low rank compared to other variables there is a high probability that the communication channels are not systematic in nature which can be confirmed with further study. Both these two factors put it at a risk for conflict which can cause not only dysfunctional relationships between the employees but also malfunctions in the organisation. It will be beneficial for the organisation to establish a self-management program for their employees since it builds on establishing their own personal goals which will be in line with the organization's goals and further

establish strategies as well as appropriate formal feedback channels to achieve the desired results. It will also be beneficial to enhance the feedback channels with grapevines since the employees have ranked their relationships as a motivating factor thus reframing the way of communication, inducing autonomy and enhancing communication channels will help the organisation to be more efficient than what it presently is. Nevertheless, motivation is also a subjective phenomenon and thus there will never be one way to motivate the employees at any organisation.

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APPENDIX

Table 1: Scores of Motivational Factors

	Number of Responses	Total	Mean	Rank
Relationship with Supervisor	35	155	4.428571429	2
Relationship with Coworkers	35	153	4.371428571	4
Relationship with Coworkers	35	153	4.371428571	4
Organizational Policies	35	148	4.228571429	11
Work Environment	35	156	4.457142857	1
Pay	35	133	3.8	19
Organizational Status	35	150	4.285714286	7
Job Security	35	148	4.228571429	11
Achievement	35	148	4.228571429	11
Recognition	35	149	4.257142857	8
Nature of Job	35	149	4.257142857	8
Responsibilty	35	147	4.2	14
Job Advancement	35	136	3.885714286	17
Growth Opportunities	35	145	4.142857143	15
Job Autonomy	35	152	4.342857143	5
Self Set Goals	35	154	4.4	3
Goals Set by Supervisor	35	130	3.714285714	20
Feedback	35	145	4.142857143	15

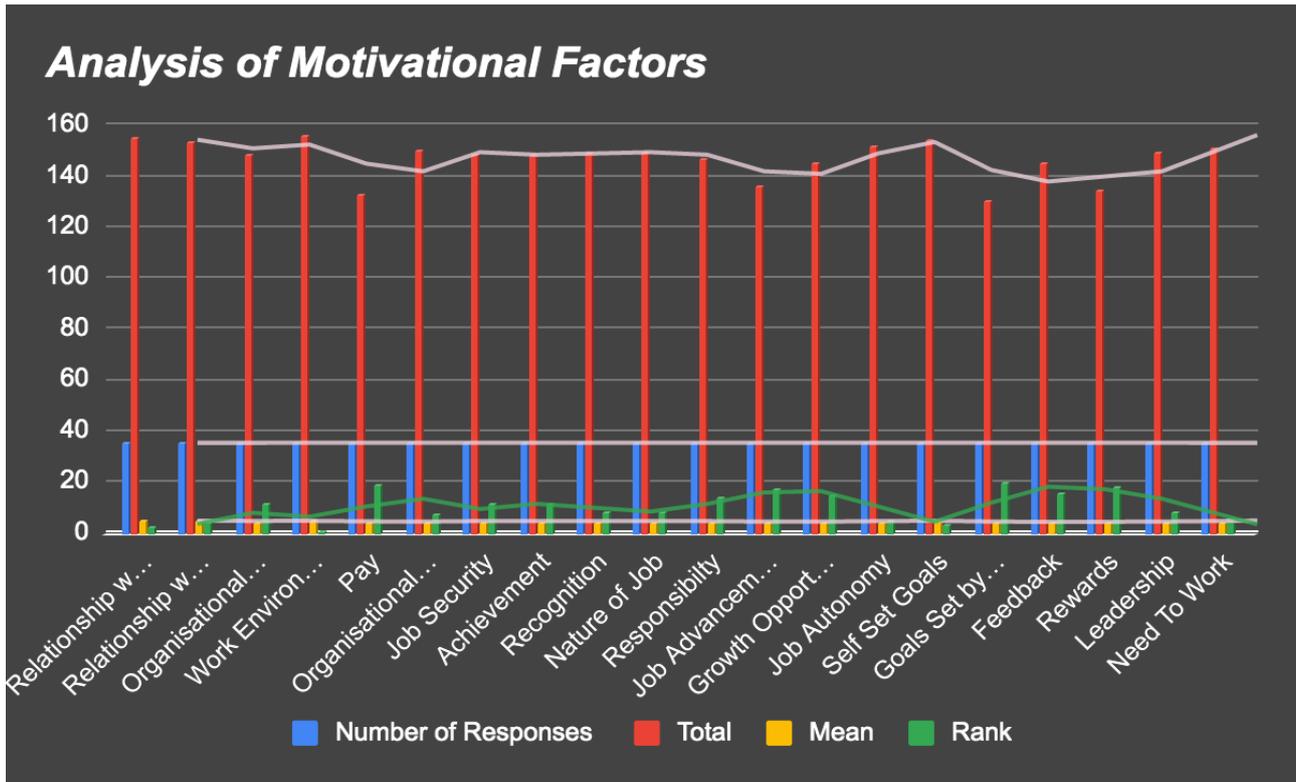| Rewards | 35 | 134 | 3.828571429 | 18 |
| Leadership | 35 | 149 | 4.257142857 | 8 |
| Need To Work | 35 | 151 | 4.314285714 | 6 |

Fig. 1: Analysis of Motivational Factors representing total figures, means and ranks.

Level of Organisation Motivation Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to give you a chance to tell what motivates you present job. It gives you a chance to point out things that drive you to excel at what you are doing and at the same time might not have any effect on your job. Further you can also point out things which failure to motivate you at your present job.

On the basis of your answers and your colleagues we hope to get a better understanding of what drives people to perform at your institution.

- On the next page you will find statements about your present job.
- Read each statement carefully.
- Decide how motivated you feel about the aspect of your job described by the statement.
- Be frank and honest. Give a true picture of your feelings about your present job.
- Ask yourself: How motivated am I with this aspect of my job?
- Very motivated means I am very motivated with this aspect of my job. Motivated means I am motivated with this aspect of my job.
- N means I can't decide whether I am motivated or not with this aspect of my job. Demotivated means I am demotivated with this aspect of my job.
- Very Demotivated means I am very demotivated with this aspect of my job.

1. The relationship I share with my supervisor
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

2. The relationships I share with my coworkers
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

3. The policies that the organisation follows

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

4. The working conditions as well as the environment of the organisation

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

5. The amount of pay

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

6. The status of the organisation

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

7. The job security that the organisation offers

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

8. The sense of achievement that I get from the organisation

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

9.The praise and recognition that I get from my superiors and peers very motivated

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

10. The job itself

☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

11. The responsibility of the job
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

12. Job advancement opportunities
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

13. The opportunity to grow in terms of learning new skills
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

14. The autonomy I get in making decisions
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

15. The goals that I set for myself
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

16. The goals that my supervisor sets for me
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

17. The feedback I get from my supervisor on my work
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

18. Rewards and Bonuses
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

19. The leadership qualities of my job
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated

☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

20. The need for me to work
☐ Very motivated
☐ Motivated
☐ N
☐ demotivated
☐ Very demotivated

Name_____   Date_____

Check One

Male_____ Female_____

When were you born _____

What is the highest level of education you have accomplished?
_____
_____

What is your present job called?
_____
_____

What do you do on your present job?
_____
_____

How long have you been on your present job? _____Years_____Months

What would you call your occupation, your usual line of work?
_____
_____

How long have you been in this line of work _____Years_____Months