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Achievement of Organisational Goals and Motivation of Middle Level Managers within the Context of the Two-Factor Theory

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Abstract

The ever dynamic nature of the world of work requires that organisations constantly review factors that energise managers (particularly middle level managers) towards achievement of set goals. This category of employees translates strategic decisions by top management into action through the operational employees. They (middle level managers) therefore serve as a link between top management and the lower level employees thus making their role to be of outmost importance to the survival and competitiveness of any organisation thus necessitating the need of our present study. The study adopted a survey research method using quantitative research design. A measuring instrument with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of above 0.70 was developed and used to collect primary data. Non-random sampling technique using purposive/convenience sampling procedure was employed in deriving a sample size of 250 middle-level managers who participated in the survey. Main hypotheses were formulated and tested using the Chi-Square test to determine the level of association between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables and achievement of organisational goals by middle level managers. Results show that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables impacted significantly on achievement of organisational goals by this category of managers. Based on this finding, we therefore recommend that organisations should combine both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables in the design of goal achievement strategy for middle level managers.

Keywords: *goal achievement; intrinsic motivation; extrinsic motivation; top management; private sector organisation*

1. Introduction

Middle level managers occupy important position in organisations as they serve as interface between top management and bottom-level employees who are essentially engaged in operational matters. The primary responsibility of middle managers is to motivate operational employees and direct their efforts in order to achieve predetermined organisational goals – which in most cases are high productivity and profits. Middle Managers are viewed as critical actors of corporate performance and change. They are responsible for translating the general goals and plans developed by senior management into more specific objectives and activities (Bateman and Snell, 2007). Dopson (1993) proposed that 'all those below the small group of top strategic managers and above first-level supervision are middle managers'. Middle managers are key players in achieving organizational objectives by motivating employees, removing obstacles, clarifying paths to goal and rewarding them accordingly. Kanter and Stein (cited in Malik, 2012) rightly quoted that their central position lies in being caught between those below, whose co-operation they need, and those above, who delegate to them the operational authority to implement the stated policy. In order for middle level managers to effectively fulfil the roles defined above, they in turn deserve to be motivated and the primary objective of the present study is to determine what motive this category of employees within the context of our understanding of the two-factor theory as proposed by Frederick Herzberg (1966).

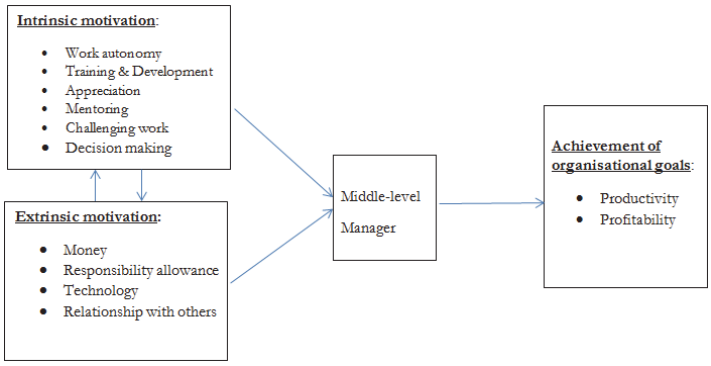
Many contemporary authors have variously defined the concept of motivation as: the psychological process that gives behaviour purpose and direction (Kreitner, 1995); a predisposition to behave in a purposive manner to achieve specific, unmet needs (Buford, Bedeian, & Lindner, 1995); an internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need (Higgins, 1994); and the will to achieve (Bedeian, 1993); the inner force that drives individuals to accomplish personal and organizational goals (Lindner, 1998). These various definitions are all set in the direction of employees, either as individuals or collective, achieving set objectives. It is however clear from literature that all categories of employees cannot be motivated by the same variable (e.g. money) and this has led organisational psychologists to continually research into

factors that motivates different category of employees and managers. The purpose of this study is to identify and model factors that motivate middle level managers within the context of the motivation and hygiene theory by Herzberg. This paper therefore hypothesises as follows:

H1: Intrinsic motivational variables will negatively motivate middle level organisational managers.

H2: Extrinsic motivational variables will positively motivate middle level organisational managers

Figure 1: Theoretical model of the relationship between motivational factors for middle level managers and organisational goal achievement



2. The Concept of Organisational Motivation

Organisational motivation has been variously described by authors (e.g., Robbins, DeCenzo & Coulter, 2010; Daft, 2002; McCullagh, 2005; Riggio, 2003; Grobler et al.., 2011). All of these definitions do however have common words such as "desire", "want", "wishes","aim","goals", "needs", and" incentives". Luthan (1998) defines motivation as, “a process that starts with a physiological deficiency or need that activates behaviour or a drive that is aimed at a goal incentive”. Therefore, the key to understanding the process of motivation lies in the meaning of, and relationship among, needs, drives, and incentives (Tella, Ayeni & Popoola, 2007).

Researchers in the field of organisational behaviour have long concluded that predetermined organisational goals cannot be achieved without the coordinating efforts of managers (at all levels). This conclusion thus re-emphasise the important role managers play in any organisation and the need to motivate them, in order for them (managers) to motivate and direct the efforts of their subordinates towards achievement of organisational goals. Motivation is a human psychological characteristic that contributes to a person's degree of commitment (Stoke, cited in Tella et al.., 2007) and it includes the factors that cause, channel, and sustain human behaviour in a particular committed direction. Stoke posits that there are certain assumptions of motivation practices by managers which must be understood. First, that motivation is commonly assumed to be a good thing. One cannot feel very good about oneself if one is not motivated. Second, motivation is one of several factors that go into a person's performance. Factors such as ability, resources, and conditions under which one performs are also important. Third, managers and researchers alike assume that motivation is in short supply and in need of periodic replenishment. Fourth, motivation is a tool with which managers can use in organizations. If managers know what drives the people working for them, they can tailor job assignments and rewards to what makes these people “tick.” Motivation can also be conceived of as whatever it takes to encourage workers to perform by fulfilling or appealing to their needs. Mullins (2010) states 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. Individual employees come to organisations with their personal goals which, in most cases are different from those of the organisation. It is therefore the responsibility of management to redirect and align employees’ goals with that of the organisation in order to achieve set objectives.

2.1 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation is described as the effort that is expended in an employee’s job to fulfil growth needs such as achievement, competence and self-actualisation and the carrying out of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather

than for some separable consequences (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Quigley & Tymon Jr, 2006). Intrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity simply for enjoyment, rather than its instrumental value. Mullins (2010: 254) maintains that in contrast, intrinsic motivation is related to 'psychological' rewards such as the 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. The psychological rewards are those that can usually be determined by the actions and behaviour of individual managers (Mullins, 2010: 254). According to Grobler et al. (2011) motivators are, to a larger extent, specific to the individual, thus a manager should attempt to meet the employee's important needs, or basic requirements for working productively. Furthermore, as the workforce becomes more diverse, recognising individuality of needs becomes quite a challenge.

A study by Georgellis, Iossa and Tabvuma (2010) revealed that extrinsic rewards such as earnings, job security and working hours are either insignificant in influencing the transition probability into the public sector or they exert a negative effect. In contrast, their findings revealed that employee satisfaction with intrinsic rewards increases the probability of transition into the public sector. They concluded that intrinsically motivated employees are attracted to public sector jobs because of a higher satisfaction with the nature of the work itself as the public sector could offer greater opportunities for pro-social or altruistic behaviours. Georgellis and colleagues' finding is consistent with that of Shaban (2010) which confirmed that employees are mostly motivated with their work nature, responsibilities given to them and supervision. The study further showed that recognition was significantly correlated with motivation, to the extent that subordinates are encouraged to repeat an exceptional performance if an earlier achievement is recognised and received praise by the supervisor.

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand is referred to as a performance of an activity in order to attain some separate outcome (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Extrinsic motivation is related to 'tangible' rewards such as salary and fringe benefits, security, the work environment, co-workers, company policies and conditions of work. Such tangible rewards are often determined at the organisational level and may be largely outside the control of individual managers. Questions about the power of extrinsic rewards, particularly salary has become a subject of debate amongst organisational psychologists with authors such as Johnson (1986), Eller, Doerfler and Meirer (2000) contending that money does matter, particularly to professionals (e.g., teachers) whose pay falls short of personal needs. The authors further argue that whilst money may not be the key to happiness, the bottom line is that at the end of the month one has to make both ends meet.

Considering the influence of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on employees' ability to perform optimally in order to achieve organisational goals, there is widespread agreement among different authors that behaviour is motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, and that a combination of the following is appropriate: achievement, recognition of achievement, interesting work content, opportunity for growth and advancement, and competitive salary. Ideally, every person will perform better if the reason for working is enjoying the task itself (i.e. intrinsic motivation). However, most workers do not work purely for enjoyment of the job, which makes them extrinsically motivated, and therefore, the role of the managers then is to pay attention to extrinsic factors in order to create an environment, in which intrinsic motivation may be released, and then to guide and sustain that motivation (DeVoe & Iyengar, 2004).

Beyond its potential to enhance individual performance, the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is of particular importance for the management of human resources. Extrinsic motivation introduces an element of competition between workers, and some theorists (e.g., Hardre, 2003) posit that this competition may become counter-productive, as people compete for the external rewards at all cost for other more important organisational goals. Lawler (cited in Hardre, 2003) argue that it will be counter-productive for organisations which aim to improve collaborative behaviour to use extrinsic rewards that foster competition because competition undermines cooperative activity.

3. Theoretical Framework

The general purpose of motivational theories is to predict behaviour. Motivation is not the behaviour itself and it is not performance. Motivation concerns action and the internal and external forces which influence a person's choice of action (Mullins, 2005) and collectively, the different theories of motivation provide a framework within which to direct attention to the problem of how best to motivate staff to work willingly and effectively (Mullins, 2010).

Building on Vroom's (1964) expectancy–valence theory of motivation, Porter and Lawler (1968) proposed a model of intrinsic and extrinsic work motivation. According to the authors, intrinsic motivation involves people doing an activity because they find it interesting and derive spontaneous satisfaction from the activity itself. Extrinsic motivation, in contrast, requires an instrumentality between the activity and some separable consequences such as tangible or verbal rewards, so satisfaction comes not from the activity itself but rather from the extrinsic consequences to which the activity leads. Porter and Lawler (1968) advocated structuring the work environment so that effective performance would lead to both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, which would in turn produce total job satisfaction. This was to be accomplished by

enlarging jobs to make them more interesting, and thus more intrinsically rewarding, and by making extrinsic rewards such as higher pay and promotions clearly contingent upon effective performance (Gagni & Deci, 2005).

Similar to Porter and Lawler (1968) model of intrinsic and extrinsic work motivation is the motivation and hygiene – two factor theory by Herzberg (1959) provides theoretical framework for our study. Frederick Herzberg's research has broadened our understanding of motivating factors and job satisfaction in the workplace. Herzberg concluded that employees have two sets of needs in the workplace - hygiene and motivator factors. Hygiene factors (satisfiers) include salary and working conditions. However, these factors on their own do not lead to job satisfaction and can lead to dissatisfaction if pay and conditions are poor. Motivators are factors such as recognition, responsibility, achievement and opportunities for progression. Herzberg found that a combination of these factors increased motivation and improved individual performance.

Literature has provided a dual classification of motivation theories as - content and process – in order to provide a further contribution to our understanding of the complex nature of work motivation. Content theories place emphasis on the nature of needs and what motivates. Major content theories of motivation include Maslow (1943) - hierarchy of needs model, McGregor (1960) - theory X and theory Y, McClelland (1962) - achievement motivation theory, Herzberg (1959) - two-factor theory; and Alderfer (1970) - modified need hierarchy model. On the other hand, process theories (or extrinsic theories) in contrast, attempt to identify the relationships among the dynamic variables that make up motivation and the actions required to influence behaviour and actions (Mullins, 2010). According to Mullins (2010: 268) many of the process theories cannot be linked to a single writer, but major approaches and leading writers include Heider (1958) - attribution theory; expectancy-based models- (Vroom, 1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968); Adams (1965) - equity theory; and Locke and Latham (1990) - goal-setting theory. Herzberg two-factor theory will be adopted for the purpose of this study.

According to Herzberg (1966) there are two factors that cause motivation and demotivation in an organisation (Halepota, 2005: 14). According to Herzberg, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are driven by different factors-motivation and hygiene factors, respectively. Furthermore, Herzberg (1966) maintains that if the motivational factors are met, the employee becomes motivated and hence performs higher. Factors that truly motivate employees to perform and inspire them to remain in organisations are aspects of the job that are considered intrinsic to the job and they include achievement, recognition of good performance, advancement and career growth opportunities. Employees are not particularly motivated by factors which Herzberg considered to be extrinsic (hygiene) to the job but these factors must be present in the organisation to make employees happy. These factors include interpersonal relationship, work condition, company policies, management style and pay. Lack of these hygiene factors can cause dissatisfaction in employees and may lead to turnover.

4. Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey design. The purpose of descriptive surveys, according to Ezeani (1998), is to collect detailed and factual information that describes an existing phenomenon. This research was conducted from an empirical perspective using quantitative design where a cross-sectional survey generated the primary research data. Chi-Square test was used for explaining and predicting relationships between variables (intrinsic & extrinsic motivation).

4.1 Population and sampling

The study participants were drawn from the total number of employees (850) employed by the private sector organisation surveyed. Non-random sampling technique using purposive/convenience sampling procedure was employed in deriving a sample size of 250 middle-level managers who participated in the survey. Non-probability sampling method is most appropriate for this study given the difficulty involved in obtaining the sample frame for the purpose of probability/random sampling.

4.2 Measuring instrument

A self-developed questionnaire consisting of 50 questionnaire items using the Likert-Scale ranging from 1 – "totally disagree" to 5 – "totally agree" was used in collecting primary data from respondents. The biographical section of the measuring instrument consisted of a number of close-ended questions on the biographical information of the respondents such as age, gender, level of education, position in organisation and tenure in organisation. The reliability of the measuring instrument is demonstrated in Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha for goal achievement, intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables

Goal achievement

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha	
Variables	Alpha
Raw	0.751134
Standardized	0.838921

Intrinsic motivation

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha	
Variables	Alpha
Raw	0.811654
Standardized	0.800842

Extrinsic motivation

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha	
Variables	Alpha
Raw	0.801142
Standardized	0.817037

Table 1 depicts the reliability coefficient of the measuring instrument suggesting that the instrument used in data collection was highly reliable given the fact that all sub-sections of the instrument were all above the acceptable 0.70 margin.

5. Findings and Discussions

Table 2: A summary of the Chi-square tests for intrinsic motivational variables

Characteristic/Raw Variable	Chi-square Value (X^2)	P-value	Significant/Not significant
Autonomy to perform task	2.695	.005	Significant
Freedom for innovative thinking	5.272	.064	Not significant
Recognition for achievement	0.354	.005	Significant
Training & development	0.381	.004	Significant
Promotion	4.307	.038	Significant
Support from top management	11.092	.032	Significant
Challenging work	8.158	.041	Significant
Setting performance goal for subordinates	3.028	.056	Not significant
Participation in decision making process	8.151	.044	Significant

P<0.05 level of significance

According to Table 2, out of the 9 variables measured, only (2) – freedom for innovative thinking and setting performance goal for subordinates – demonstrated non-significant P-values.

Table 3: A summary of the Chi-square tests for extrinsic motivational variables

Characteristic/Row Variable	Chi-square Value(X^2)	P-value	Significant/Not significant
Salary package	2.990	.000	Significant
Responsibility allowance	8.847	.003	Significant
Cutting-edge technology	7.146	.008	Not significant
Relationship with subordinate	8.775	.079	Not significant
Job security	9.628	.002	Significant
Company policies	8.880	.080	Not significant

P<0.05 level of significance

The results displayed in Table 3 shows a non-significant statistical relationship between cutting-edge technology (P-value - .008), relationship with subordinates (.079), and company policies (.080). Cutting-edge technology showed a slightly non-significant statistical relationship with goal achievement (P-value .008). This result is consistent with previous findings by Wagner (2013) which contended that many organisations are beginning to either eliminate or reduce the position of middle-level managers due to work automation. Wagner considered such tendency as a 'huge' mistake by organisations as a study by Tabrizi (cited in Wagner, 2013) shows that successful enterprises make superior use of middle

management because executives are often too far from line employees to effectively inspire change and monitor operational achievement of organisational goals as middle-level managers would do. Studies (e.g., McDermott, 2001) suggest that most young (middle-level) managers serve in positions with limited interpersonal skills and are inexperienced in coping with people who have different backgrounds or are of different ages. This category of managers sometimes act under pressure when interacting with their superiors and subordinates which often results in strained relationships (Jex, 1998) as a result of lack of proper understanding of the dynamics of workplace diversity.

The overall results of the present study find considerable support with the findings by Emmanuel, Kominus and Slapnicar (2007) in a cross-cultural study middle level managers perceive feelings of accomplishment and recognition appear to be highly desirable rewards all middle managers perceive motivation as related with performance the significant influences on motivation vary with the design of the specific company's reward system. The attainability of targets, the accuracy of performance indicators, the extrinsic and the intrinsic rewards have a direct and significant influence on motivation in Greece The attainability of targets has a direct and significant effect on motivation in Slovenia. In the UK, extrinsic and intrinsic rewards have a lower-order direct impact on motivation, but the convergence of accurate performance indicators, attainability of targets, and transparency of performance-related rewards, appear to condition the impact of extrinsic rewards on managerial motivation. Inconsistent with the results of our study however is the finding by Emmanuel and colleagues that cash bonus, personal development and promotion to be part of their employment Contract middle level managers do not necessarily value these rewards as the most important

6. Conclusions

There is evidence to support the main objective of our study to the extent that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational variables are important (when combined) in motivating middle level managers to achieve organisational goals. It is therefore important for top managers to consider a mixture of both when designing motivational strategies for middle level managers given the important role this category of employees play in the survival of an organisation. The motivation of middle level management is a fascinating and largely uncharted area of study; yet gaining this cadre's commitment to corporate goals may depend on the reward system design.

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