

## THE EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND ITS ROLE IN IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ORGANIZATION

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### **Abstract.**

*Through this study, we have proposed to analyze the motivation of employees from the point of view of their job satisfaction, to explain the connection between satisfaction, motivation, involvement in work and the efficiency of the organization. We analyzed several bibliographic sources where it was published the researches of experts from different countries, to convince us and bring arguments that there is a direct correlation between the motivation of employees, their job satisfaction and the impact on improving the efficiency of the organization. We demonstrate that motivation is a dynamic process, because the needs of employees change, depending on the factors of the work environment work. If the employer wish to have as much as possible involvement of his employees, must constantly monitor this process and implement motivation strategies, according to the real needs. I have highlighted two significant circumstances changed the nature of the work and which determined changes in the concrete methods of motivating employees. We are referring to the Covid-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic effects for employees, as well as the digitization of processes and the use of artificial intelligence, which have a significant impact on the character of the employee's work, transforming the way they do their work. We formulated some conclusions and recommendations for the managers of the organizations, which would contribute to a better connection between the employees of the organization and its performance..*

**Key words:** *employee motivation, organizational efficiency, organizational performance, nature of work.*

**JEL:** *M12, M50.*

### **1. Introduction**

One of the essential challenge in the field of management in the 21st century is the efficiency of the human resources management and the stimulation of the employee motivation, which is a fundamental aspect of the personnel management system. The current theories in human resource management emphasize the increasing importance of the employees' personality, the need to understand their motivational attitudes, as well as the ability to influence and guide them in accordance with the challenges of the company.

Motivation is one of the fundamental functions of the modern management, its main objective is to grow the efficiency of human resources of the company. Although the subject of motivation has always been a point of interest in the field of human resources management, the current solutions do not respond to the contemporary requirements, this discrepancy being attributed not only to the inherent complexity of the motivational process, but also to the continuous changes of the work relationship, in the context of business in general and management in particular. In this context, the motivation of the employees requires a distinctive strategy, considering the specifics of each organization and the personality of each employee. It should be considered that the employee represents the organization's strategic resource, significantly influencing the performance of the

company. This fact requires not only the knowledge of general models of motivation, but also a pertinent analysis of the particularities of the company, the profile of its employees, the available resources, as well as the context on the labor market.

Currently, there are substantial changes in the way the work is performed, and this means that workers have to adapt to a workplace that requires different skills, a different organization, where the previous habits may no longer be valid. In this context, the relevance of the human resources motivation in ensuring the efficiency of company becomes more and more necessary. It is also determined by the dynamic of the work, the digitization of processes, the increase in the level of education and social expectations of employees, as well as the globalization and the competition.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between employee motivation and organizational performance, identifying the factors that contribute to increased professional engagement and enhanced efficiency within companies. The research aims to explore the methods and strategies of motivation employed by organizations, assess their impact on employee productivity and satisfaction, and provide practical recommendations for creating a work environment that fosters both individual and collective performance.

To achieve the objectives of this study, we adopted a documentary research approach, focusing on the analysis of relevant bibliographic sources that reflect the current situation and trends in the field under investigation. We examined a variety of scientific sources centered on human resources, their motivation, the transformation of the nature of work, as well as the effects that motivation has on organizational efficiency.

## **2. CORE CONTENT**

### **2.1. Synthesizing Previous Research on Motivation and the Link Between Motivation and Organizational Efficiency**

In the context of professional activity, motivation can be defined as the level of employees' availability to actively involve in their tasks and make a consistent effort to achieve objectives, whether individual or organizational. Motivation is a fundamental aspect of the managerial process, being considered an essential component alongside planning, organizing, coordinating, and evaluation-control. It relies on harmonizing the individual interests and needs of employees with the purpose and requirements of the organization.

Motivation is not a new concept. However, most contemporary motivation theories were formulated in the second half of the 20th century. Many sources studying the concept classify these theories in various ways, the most used classification being based on two main categories: (i) cognitive or content theories and (ii) process theories. The first category focuses on the cognitive and emotional aspects (in the sense of understanding) associated with the internal factors of the individual that influence the energy, the direction, sustaining, and inhibiting of human behavior. In contrast, the second category analyzes how behavior is stimulated, coordinated, sustained, and stopped (Table 1).

**Table 1. Systematization of Classic Motivational Theories**

Category	Characteristics	Theory	Examples
Content theories	The theory analyzes the factors that stimulate or set off motivated behavior.	1. Hierarchy of needs theory 2. Theory of dual factors 3. The theory of success 4. ERG theory 5. Theory X and Y	Motivation for money, social status and personal satisfaction
Process theories	The theory analyzes the factors that influence the behavior	1. Theory of expected performances 2. Equity theory 3. Theory of objectives	Motivation that comes from within of each person to work, to perform and to gain recognition.
Reinforcement theories	The theory analyzes the factors that repeat a behavior	Conditioning theory	Motivation by rewarding the behavior

*Source: Islam N. (1999). A Few Aspect of Motivation.*

Among the theories in the first group, i.e., content theories, are: (i) Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, (ii) Herzberg's two-factor theory, (iii) Alderfer's ERG model, and (iv) McClelland's learned needs theory. Conversely, process theories of motivation include (i) the expectancy theory, (ii) the equity theory, and (iii) the goal-setting theory. A third group included in Table 1 is Skinner's reinforcement theory (1953, 1969), which affirm that behaviors of the employees that give positive results will be repeated, while that behaviors resulting in negative results won't be repeated. Managers should encourage employee behaviors which generate positive results by providing bonus. At the same time, it is important to discourage behaviors which not give are scouted results, through performance feedback and, when necessary, by applying sanctions. Skinner (Skinner B., 2013) based on external environment, affirming that human behavior can be influenced by modifying its consequences, entirely ignoring internal motivational factors and focusing exclusively on external environmental factors.

We have concluded that only a motivational method is efficient for all the employees. The use of a theory depends on the context, environment, period, and typology of the individuals involved. Based on the definitions provided, motivation can be described as a physical and mental force that makes

easier the execution or the implementation of the tasks, with the purpose to satisfy human needs, desires, expectations, and aspirations (Islam N., 1999).

One research direction in employee motivation is the analysis of “bonus” (Alier R., 2022) at the work, considered essential factors for improving performance. Organizations have implemented various combinations of employee benefits, such as healthcare assurances, life insurances, profit-sharing, employee stocks, sport facilities, meals tickets, childcare options, company vehicles and more, in an effort to maintain high levels of employee satisfaction based on the idea that satisfied employees are motivated employees. However, many contemporary theorists suggest that the motivation of employee depends less on financial benefits and more on aspects of the work environment. The researches from 1950s shows that highly segmented and simplified jobs reduced performance of the employees. The negative effects of reduced motivation are absenteeism and fluctuation of employees, both of which have significant financial implications for any organization.

Motivation can be both positive and negative. Examples of negative motivations include afraid of losing job, salary and bonus degree, job demotions. Today, positive motivation is more applied than negative motivation. Positive motivation utilizes both financial and non-financial bonus.

Financial motivation is an important and efficient technique that grow up employee performance. This can be made with a good salary or other benefits such as bonuses insurances, etc. The increased financial benefits also improves the employee performance. By the other side, if financial benefits decrease, the employee performance will be reduced. This perspective is promoted by the managers. They use financial benefits at the top of the motivation scale (Bernstein and Pollock, 1985). Researchers that study behavioral science, replace this perspective on the lower scale. We believe that neither concept is entirely correct in its pure form. Money is undoubtedly important for basic needs of individuals and their families. Once these needs are met, job satisfaction is accomplished. However, money is not always an efficient motivational technique. It is an important motivational tool only when the social and familial status of individuals are reduced. Studies have shown that salary, as a method of motivation, does not grow long-term productivity and does not significantly improve performance (Whitley, 2002).

Moreover, focusing only on this aspect could damage employee attitudes, as they could be focused only by financial benefits. Also, many studies show that rewards gain the job satisfaction, which positively influences employee performance. Additionally, rewards are among the most efficient management tools when trying to influence individual or group behavior to improve organizational performance. (Dobre O.I., 2013).

Our subject of interest is not only motivation itself, but the relationship between motivation and organizational performance, a subject that has long been studied by scientific and also practical discourse. It is crucial for organizational management to understand how motivation influences employee performance, considering the needs of organizations to improve their results. Our theoretical review, based on specialized literature and available theories to clarify fundamental concepts and mechanisms governing this interdependence, confirmed that motivation is a basic psychological concept that make individuals to initiate, maintain, and direct their behaviors toward achieving specific objectives (Akerele O.O., 2023).

In the organizational context, employee motivation is crucial for determining their performance, which influences the organization performance (Bîrcă A., 2018). Various theories have been

formulated to elucidate the complex mechanisms by which motivation contributes to organizational performance.

Many empirical studies show the positive connection between motivation and organizational performance. Intrinsic motivation, provided from the inside and satisfaction associated with the job activity, has a significant impact on activity results. When employees feel satisfied and accomplished at work, they demonstrate creativity, innovation, and performance. This type of motivation drives employees to exceed their job tasks, contributing to improve productivity and organizational success. Extrinsic motivation, based on external rewards such as financial bonuses, promotions, and recognition, also have an important role to improve organizational performance. These external factors improve performance, and facilitate the attraction and maintaining of valuable profesionist in organization.

Some studies (Akerlele O.O., 2023) emphasize the circular interdependence between performance, satisfaction, and motivation.

When employees achieve outstanding results, they experience intrinsic satisfaction, which is reflected in their behavior and amplifies their motivation. This intrinsic satisfaction acts as a driver for long-term performance, contributing to the overall improvement of organizational performance. Additionally, establishing clear criteria during the hiring process can lead to superior results. If organizational performance improves, employees could gain additional benefits that grow their motivation.



**Figure 1. Correlation between employee motivation, job satisfaction and employee performance.**

*Source: developed by author based on Akerlele O.O., 2023)*

In the same time, we point out that the work activity and organizational culture are important factors in determining the type of motivation. So, financial benefits may be efficient for the companies acting in commercial field, where intrinsic motivators may be more relevant in creative fields.

## **2.2. The Changing Role of Work and Motivation**

In recent period, organizations have experienced significant processes that have led to essential changes in the nature of employee work (Cotelnic, 2023). Notably, the digitalization of processes and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) have had a substantial impact on the character of work, transforming the way employees perform their tasks.

These technologies automate routine and repetitive tasks, freeing employees from mechanical duties and allowing them to focus on more creative and strategic activities. Digital technologies also facilitate remote work, providing employees with greater flexibility regarding work schedules and locations. However, these changes can also lead to an increased demand for constant availability, variable work schedules, blurred boundaries between professional and personal life, and the emergence of unstable work types.

Digitalization offers employees quick access to information and resources essential for completing their tasks. This enhances efficiency and can make more informed decisions. Digital platforms support collaboration among employees regardless of their location. Online communication and collaboration help employees and teams to work and the exchange their ideas. Through digital technologies, employees can access online courses, webinars, and educational resources to develop their skills, encouraging continuous learning and adaptation to industry changes.

However, these significant shifts can also have less favorable effects on employees, leading to discomfort and anxiety. Digital tools enable closer performance monitoring. Mobile, wearable, or embedded digital monitoring technologies (in clothing or on the body) are used to track workers in real-time. While real-time feedback can improve performance, it can also create pressure and stress. The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA, 2021 research program) warns that AI-assisted digital monitoring technologies can facilitate invasive monitoring that negatively impacts employees' mental health.

Employees may feel a loss of control over their work content, pace, and schedule, as well as how they complete tasks. They might also experience difficulties in social interactions or taking breaks as needed, feeling intruded upon in their personal lives. For instance, the use of data for rewarding, penalizing, or even excluding employees can foster feelings of insecurity and stress. To avoid these effects, transparency in data collection and use is essential.

Additionally, with the implementation of AI, some roles are changing, requiring employees to redefine their skills and adapt to new responsibilities, such as managing automated systems or interpreting AI-generated data.

In conclusion, the digitalization of processes and artificial intelligence are profoundly transforming the nature of work, influencing not only how employees perform their duties but also their satisfaction and development within a continuously changing work environment. Adaptability and digital skills are becoming increasingly crucial for professional success.

Another significant factor that has impacted the nature of work and employees is the COVID-19 pandemic, which began at the end of 2019 and especially in early 2020. It created more complex and challenging work environments for both employees and managers (Cotelnic & Scarlat, 2020).

For almost two years, organizations were not sufficiently prepared to manage this crisis. As a result, many companies operated through remote work, forcing employees to work from home. Numerous studies show the benefits of working from home, such as personal comfort, flexible working hours,



not needing to move till the job office, managing domestic duties, and taking care of family while working (Wheatley D, 2017). These aspects were seen as benefits, resulting in greater satisfaction before the pandemic as employees enjoyed flexible working hours. However, COVID-19 changed this due to strict and prolonged lockdowns. Employees were forced to work in isolated environments, separated from their colleagues, feeling isolated, and losing social life. These consequences led to negative effects mentioned by most employees, such as the blurring of the line between work and personal life (Anupama A., Vasanti T., 2023).

Some employees worried about missed career growth opportunities, loss of benefits, bonus, and positive performance evaluations due to working from home and extended lockdowns. This resulted in depression, decreased morale, and reduced motivation. The role of managers is to create virtual teams to ensure business continuity and try to minimize the consequences of social exclusion caused by the shift to remote work. Physical distancing measures and the lack of workplace culture have become key points for increasing employees' feelings of loneliness.

Another challenge for organizations and their employees came during the post-pandemic period when, in many cases, in-person work resumed. Employees needed to readapt to already changed realities. In this context, employees' needs and aspirations for productive work were no longer the same as before the pandemic. This reconfirms that ensuring productive work with a positive impact on organizational performance requires continuous study of employee needs, the factors that bring job satisfaction, and what makes them more efficient.

### **3.CONCLUSIONS**

The research we conducted allowed us to have several conclusions regarding employee motivation and its impact on organizational performance.

Employee motivation consists of the set of factors that drive individuals to act in a specific way to achieve their objectives. The key to understanding motivation lies in the relationships between needs, stimulents and purpose. When people are inspired to reach their full potential, their results are remarkable.

Over time, researchers have developed various theories related to the concept of motivation. Understanding these theories is essential for employers to better comprehend what actions are necessary for employees to perform optimally and contribute to the organization's success. However, it must be considered that concrete motivational methods depend on the industry in which the business operates, the organizational culture, the nature of the work, the characteristics of the period, and other factors. This underscores the need for a personalized approach to employee motivation and the adaptation of motivational strategies to specific contexts. To implement this personalized approach and make the necessary adjustments to meet the evolving needs of employees, it is important for organizations to continuously assess these needs and maintain ongoing feedback.

Beyond financial motivation, non-financial methods are gaining increased importance. These include promoting a positive work environment by appreciating and recognizing employee contributions, encouraging open communication, collaboration, and trust within the organization; providing opportunities for skill development, career advancement, and personal growth.

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