Motivation: A Panacea for Employees Performance and Retention

Nezekolizibe Titus, Gogo Rachael Adiza

Abstract: *Motivation of employees is seen to be an indisputable force which propels employees' commitment towards attainment of organization's goal. It has become obvious that the sustainability, profitability and growth of any organization is not without the human element which is cardinal. The main purpose of this work is to stress on the vital role motivation plays in defining the performance and retention of skilled, experienced, and highly qualified employees in the organization in order to save it from the cost of labor turnover as witnessed in present day business establishment. The study ended with a recommendation which include; recognition of great work done by employees, effective communication, allowing some level of autonomy for employees to exercise.*

Keywords: Motivation, employee performance, employee retention, Need, Goal

1. Introduction

Globally, organizations both large and small have come to realize that the human resource of an organization is an indispensable element which must be accorded uncompromised attention if such organization must be competitive and gain reasonable market share in the business environment. With the rise in employee turnover witnessed by organizations and the search for better pay by employees, the need for management of organizations to motivate employees for better performance has become imperative. Performance of the employee can be considered as what an employee does and what he doesn't do. Employee performance involves quality and quantity of output, presence of work, accommodative and helpful nature and timeliness of output.In the view of Yang (2008), the performance of individuals cannot be rectified. He asserted that organizations can use direct bonuses and rewards based on individual performance if employee performance is noticeable. Morale and productivity of employees is highly influenced by the effectiveness of performance of an organization and its reward management system (Yazici, 2008).

Retention of employees has been seen to be significant to the development and achievement of organization's goals and objectives. It is a vital source ofglobal economic practice, employee/employer relationship is being adversely affected. Talented and outstanding employees may pull out from an organization because they are either dissatisfied with certain activities and decisions in the organization, underpaid or unmotivated (Coff, 1996), and while trying to retain employee within the organization, they may present other challenges such as demand for higher wages, non-compliance to organizational practices and managers' directives.No employee with the requisite skills, experience and other qualifications would be so willing to contribute optimally towards the achievement of organizational goals when he/she does not see the drives/forces in him, hence the concept of motivation becomes inevitable and vital in influencing the employees retention. This would not only help in saving cost but positions the organization in a more competitive advantage within the business landscape.

Motivation as a concept originated from a Latin word "Movere" which means to "move". It stems from the word "motive". Different scholars from the field of management, psychology and philosophy have given varying representations on the meaning of motivation but there seemed to be no unifying definition in the sense that what appears to motivate an employee may not necessarily motivate another, owing to differences in needs and other factors.

In spite of the various submissions by scholars on how to motivate employees in the organization for effective and efficient performance and retention, the challenges of motivating employees still subsist. This research work is however, geared towards looking at motivation and how it serves to influence employees performance and retention, viewing it from the academic perspective.

Definition of motivation. Motivation as submitted by Khanka (2008), is one's willingness to exert efforts towards the accomplishment of his/her set goal. Amah (2010) defined motivation as psychological forces within a person that energizes, directs and sustains that person's effort towards goal attainment. Motivation is a determinant of the possible voluntary behaviors an individual could engage among different alternatives. The level of energy an employee would be willing to put in to achieve a goal is also determined by motivation. In the view of Robbins (1998), motivation is the willingness to exert high levels of effort towards organizational goals, conditioned by the effort ability to satisfy some individuals. Motivation is a set of forces that directs an individual to the behavior that results in better job performance. A motivated employee might work harder than expected to complete the task, proactively find ways to improve the quality and efficiency of the work environment.

2. The Basic Motivational Framework

The framework given below depicts the processes which motivation of employees undergo

Source: Adopted from Pallabi Sarkar(2016)

The framework comprises six (6) steps. Motivation process as shown in the figure begins with the individual's needs. Needs are felt deprivations which the individual experiences at a given time and act as energizers. These needs may be psychological (e.g. the need for security), physiological (e.g. the need for water, air or food) or social (e.g. the need for friendship). These deficiencies force the individual to search for ways to reduce them (step 2).

Motivation is goal directed (step 3). A goal is specific result that the individual wants to achieve. An employee's goal are often driven forces and accomplishing role goals can reduce needs to a great extent. For instance, there are employees with strong drive for advancement and expectations that, working long hours on visible project will lead to promotions, and greater influence. Such needs and expectations create uncomfortable tension within the individuals and therefore sustain certain behaviors to overcome the tension. Employees striving to advance may seek to work on major problems facing the organization in order to gain visibility and influence with senior managements (step 4). Promotion is one of the ways that organizations seek to maintain desirable behavior. They are signals to employees that their needs for advancement and recognition and their behaviors are appropriate (steps 5). The moment employees receive either reward or punishment, they reassess their needs (step 6).

Needs and Motives in Organization.Pertinent to note is the fact that the process of motivation actually begins with a need. This need now creates a tension within an employee that makes him/her take certain steps to actualize the need. The motivating behavior is seen with the tension created. Koontz et al (2011) believe that it is the responsibility of management of an organization to provide an environment that is conducive for employee performance. According to Jaja (2003), a motive (drive) is a need that is sufficiently pressing to drive a person to act in a goal directed manner. Motive is an inner state that energizes, activates, or moves (hence motivation) and that directs or channels behavior towards goals (Berdson and Steirner, 1964). In the view of Khanka (2008), it is the inner state of human mind which activates and directs his/her behavior. It is the reason for doing something (Armstrong, 2012).

Perspectives on Employee Motivation

There are basically two different perspectives on employee motivation in organization. They are:

1) Content theory or Need based theory
2) Process theory / or cognitive model

Content Theory/Need Theory (Perspective).The content theory or perspective is approach to motivation that tries to answer the question", what factor or factors motivate people? Under the content theory/perspective, the biggest approach that is addressed is the need hierarchy with many different theories underneath that practical approach. The theories identify the needs of individuals as the beginning point of motivation. The main theories under this category as x-rayed by Khanka (2008) are:

1) Abraham Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory
2) Frederick Herzberg's Two -factor theory
3) Douglas McGregor's Theory x and theory y
4) Alderfer's ERG theory
5) David C McClelland's Three need theory

Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. One of thewidely discussed theories of motivation is the hierarchy of needs theory postulated by Abraham Maslow in 1954 and was based on human need. He classified needs into a hierarchical manner from the lower to the higher order. Maslow is of the opinion that once a particular level of need is satisfied, it no longer seemed to be as a motivator. It therefore means that next level of need on the hierarchy has to be activated in order to motivate the man. Maslow identified five levels in his need hierarchy:

1) Physiological Need
2) Safety Need
3) Social Needs
4) Esteem Needs
5) Self-Actualization Needs

i. ***Physiological needs:*** These needs are fundamental to human life and therefore include food, clothing, shelter, air, water and other necessities of life.
ii. ***Safety needs***: Once the physiological needs have been met (satisfied), the next felt needs are safety and security needs e.g. need for economic protection, protection from physical danger or harm.
iii. ***Social need:*** These needs include; affection, belongingness, acceptance and friendship.
iv. ***Esteem needs***: Maslow posited that once people begin to satisfy their need to belong they tend to want to be held in esteem both by themselves and by others. They include self-respect, autonomy (power) achievement, recognition, states and attention.
v. ***Self-Actualization***: Maslow saw that need as the highest need in his hierarchy. This need is often called fulfillment need. An employee is said to attain actualization when he feels he has reached the climax he is able to reach in organization or life generally.

Criticism of Abraham Maslow's Need Theory. As highly appreciated and defended Maslow' content theory is someof his arguments put forth has been disputed by scholars. Nwachukwu (1999) submitted that human needs are interrelated and that by satisfying one need, the other needs are apparently receiving attention, for the dignity of human beings is predicated on the satisfaction of all the needs.

Therefore, the issue of successive saturation by Maslow does not apply absolutely.Furthermore; the needs may not follow a definite hierarchical order as these may be overlapping in need hierarchy. For instances, even if the safety need is not satisfied, the social need may emerge. Amah (2010) put it that gratification of one needs level does not also automatically lead to increased motivation to satisfy the next highest level of need. Notwithstanding, Maslow's preposition has received global/acceptance and being largely put into practice among practicing managers.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Fredrick Herzberg was an AmericanPsychologist, born in 1923 and passed away in 2000. He was a management professor at case Western Research University. One of Herzberg's many theories is known as the Two-Factor Theory or the Motivation – Hygiene Theory conducted in the late 1950s. It is also known as Motivation – Maintenance Theory.Herzberg utilized the interview method in his research to identify what motivate employees in which he conducted a study on 200 accountants and engineers employed by firms in and around Western Pennsylvania where he asked them to give a description of two vital incidents at their jobs:

1) When did you feel particularly good about your job?
2) When did you feel exceptionally bad about your job?

In light of the findings from the research carried out by Herzberg, he drew an inference that different factors are responsible for good feelings (job satisfaction and motivation); and bad feelings (job dissatisfaction and loss of morale). Furthermore, he stated that the opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction but rather no job satisfaction. According to Herzberg, the factors of satisfaction are more related to the job content or intrinsic factors such as;

1) Achievement
2) Nature of a job itself
3) Responsibilities
4) Recognition for achievement
5) Growth
6) Advancement opportunities

That the availability of these factors result in satisfaction or motivation of employees and he called them satisfiers or motivators. Their absence leaves the employee with no satisfaction but not dissatisfaction (Agu, 2003).Conversely, job dissatisfaction (bad feelings) were associated with context or extrinsic factors such as:

1) Supervision ie. Quality of supervision
2) Inter-personal relations
3) Working condition
4) Salary
5) Company policy and administration
6) Job security

Herzberg called these factors dissatisfiers or hygiene factors or maintenance factors. They are not necessarily prerequisites to employees' motivation but need to be present for the motivating factors to be effective.When we make a brief comparison of Maslow's Need Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, we could deduce that while Maslow considers all the factors in the hierarchies as motivating factors, Herzberg see only the Esteem and self-Actualization needs as motivating factors, while the lower needs of man (employee); physiological needs, safety and social needs he considered them hygiene/maintenance factors.

McClelland's Theory of Learned Needs. David C. McClelland need based – theory is another well-known motivation theory opposed to Maslow's hierarchy of needs and that of Herzberg's two-factor theory which emphasizes on satisfaction and dissatisfaction. McClelland's need theory seem to be closely related to learned theory because he believed that needs are learned or acquired by the kinds of events people experienced in their environment and culture (Khanka, 2008). Thebelieve according to McClelland is that people who acquire a particular need behave differently from those who do not have. The needs are learned because they are strongly influenced by personality and environmental factors. (Amah, 2010) McClelland's theory however focused on Henry Murray's three needs:

1) Achievement
2) Power
3) Affiliation

Need for Achievement: This is the desire to excel, to achieve in relation to a set of standard, and to strive to succeed. McClelland posited that individuals with high need for achievement tend to perform better than people with moderate or low need for achievement. He identified the following facts with high need achievers;

- Strong desire for performance feedback
- Strong desire to assume personal responsibility for performing a task of finding a solution to a problem.
- Tend to set moderately difficult goals and take calculated risk in achieving those goals.
- Do not work unduly about   if it does occur.

Need for power: The need to influence others behavior, be in control, and make people behave the way they wouldn't have. These set of people have concern for maintaining leader-follower relations. According to Amah (2006) power can be personalized or socialized. It is personalized if the individual uses it aggressively to manipulate and exploit others, and to pursue individual goals. On the other hand, it is socialized when it is channeled towards improvement of organizations and societies.

Needs for Affiliation: This has to do with desire for friendship and interpersonal relationships. People with this need has;

- Strong duties for approval and acceptance by others
- Value the feelings of others.

Affiliation and powers needs seem to be closely associated to management success in organizations. The lest managements are high in their need for power and low in the need for affiliation (Mines, 1965). Tedeschi (1974) cited in kiptis held the view that a high power need may occur

simply as a function of ones level in a hierarchical organization.

Process/Cognitive Perspective on Motivation. Process perspective means the approaches to motivation that focus on why people choose certain behavioral options to fulfill their needs and how they evaluate their satisfaction after they have attained these goals. Process theories deal with the "process" of motivation and are concerned with how motivation occur. The following are theories under the process/cognitive perspective motivation:

1) Vroom's expectancy theory
2) Porter and Lawler's expectancy theory
3) Adams Equity theory
4) Goal setting theory

Expectancy Theory: Expectancy theory isone approach that offers explanation to motivation. The vital element in expectancy theory is that; people will be motivated to do things to achieve some goals, to the extent that they believe certain actions on their part will help them achieve the goal (Jaja, 2003). Motivation to perform will be on the high side when employees know whatthey have to do to get a reward, when they expect that they will be able to get the reward, and that the reward will be worthwhile (Armstrong, 2012).

Vroom (1964) in his expectancy theory posited that people will be motivated to exert a high level of effort when they believe that an association exist between the efforts they put forth, the performance they achieve and the rewards/ outcome they receive. Vroom's postulation can also be expressed mathematically as:

Motivation = Valence x performance x instrumentality
Where:
Valence: means the value or strength (efforts) one places on particular outcome or rewards
Performance: It relates effort to performance
Instrumentality: It relates performance to reward

Assessing vroom's theory, one could deduce that vroom recognized the significance of various individual needs and motivations. The theory also recognizes the concept of harmony, which states that individuals have personal goals different from the organizational goals, but that these goals can be harmonized. Furthermore, the theory is in conformity with the principle of managing by objectives (MBO).

Porter and Lawler (1968) added their dimension to the expectancy theory. They posited that the level of effort was affected by the level of rewards and the probabilitythat reward followed effort. However, they were prompt in submitting that effort was not sufficient to achieve high performance and that led to the identification of two additional factors as; 1. Ability and 2. Role perception. Ability here has to do with the individual's intelligence, knowledge, and skills while role perception deals with what individuals want to do or think they are required to do.

3. Other Theories on Employee Motivation

Alderfer's ERG Theory: Clayton Alderfer (1969) reworked Maslow's need theory to align it more closely with the empirical research. Alderfer classified human needs into three broad needs as follows:

1) Existence Need: the existence group is concerned with providing some basic materials existence requirements. They are basic material needs for one's existence or survival
2) Relatedness Need: These have to do with desire to establish, maintain, and develop interpersonal relations.
3) Growth Need: These refer to one's intrinsic desire for one's development to the extent one can.

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y: Douglas McGregor formulated two distinct views of human beings based on participation of workers. The first was labelled as theory X and the second as theory Y. He saw theory X as being negative, premised on the following assumptions:

People are by nature lazy, People lack ambition, dislike responsibility, and prefer to be directed by others, People are inherently self-centered and indifferent to organizational needs and goals, People are generally gullible, and not very sharp and bright.

Conversely, theory Y assumes that:
People are not by nature passive or resistant to organizational goals, they want to assume responsibility, They want their organization to succeed, People are capable of directing their own behaviour, They have need for achievement. McGregor's postulation is anchored on the attitudes of individuals to task or responsibilities. However, it is difficult to strictly classify man into any of the two categories, but a blend of both characteristics dictated by the mood and motives of individuals within the context of a changing environment.

Urwick's theory Z: Theory Z is often associated with Urwick, Rangnekar, and Ouchi. Urwick's theory posits that; Each individual should know the organizational goals precisely and the amount of contribution through his efforts towards these goals, each individual should also bear in mind that the realization of organizational goals is going to satisfy his /her needs positively. Urwick had the believe that the above conditions inform individual's positive behaviour to accomplishing both organizational and personal goals

Ouchi Theory Z: Ouchi theory Z is based on the following assumptions: Strong bond between organizations and employees, employee participation and involvement, no normal organizational structure, human resource development. Ouchi's theory Z is a representation of typical Japanese management practice which includes; group decision making, social cohesion, job security, holistic concern for employees etc.

Equity Theory. Equity theory which is popularly credited to J. S. Adams (1963) holds the view about an individual's subjective judgments about the Fairness of the reward he or she got relative to the inputs such as effort, experience and

education, in comparison with the rewards of others. Equity is basically concerned with a balance of the outcomes / inputs relationship for one person in comparison with that for another. Worthy to note is the point that when an employee perceive an unequal situation, equity tension is experienced which may be accompanied with a commensurate behavior. If employees witness inequality in desire of reward, the tendency of reducing their output is high. On the contrary if people think what they get as reward is more than what is viewed to be equitable, they will be poised to work harder.

Reinforcement Perspective of Motivation

The reinforcement theory of motivation was proposed by B.F. Skinner (1938). This theory posits that behavior is the function of its consequences which means an individual develops a behavior after performing certain actions. The theory is based on the "Law of Effect" concept, i.e. an individual is likely to repeat those actions having the positive consequences and will avoid those behavior that result in negative or unpleasant outcomes. The reinforcement theory does not utilize the concept of a motive or process of motivation. Rather, it deals with how the consequences or past action influence future actions in cyclical learning process (Jaja, 2003).

In the view of steers and porter (1979), reinforcement theory tend to ignore the inner state of the individual and concentrates strictly on what happens to a person when he takes some actions but it does not concern itself with what initiates behaviour. Reinforcement theory does not strictly speak as a theory of motivation, but provides a powerful means of analysis of what controls behavior, hence it is considered in discussions concerning motivation (Jaja, 2000). The behaviors that elicit consequences is called "Operant Behavior" and reinforcement theory works on the relationship between the operant behaviour and the associated consequences and therefore, is often called operant conditioning. Operant conditioning means, the change in the behaviour caused due to the reinforcement (positive reward or punishment) given after the response.

The reinforcement theory lays emphasis on the environmental factors that shape the behaviors and thus, skinner believed that environment external to the organization must be designed effectively so as to increase the motivation among the employees. Therefore, the theory focuses mainly on what happens when an individual takes some action. It has been noticed over time that people would like to repeat those activities which give them pleasure and avoid the activities with negative consequences. Skinner identified four types of reinforcement:

- Positive reinforcement
- Avoidance / negative reinforcement
- Punishment
- Extinction

Implications of Motivation on Academic Workforce

The systematic application of motivation theory for school settings is a major challenge for school management. In the view of Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991), school management must learn to appropriately apply the basic theories of motivation to the school climate. The responsibility of promotion of a climate of excellence in which academic staff are motivated with the express purpose of maximizing performances and promoting professional growth and change lies with school management. According to Firestorn and Pennel (1993), committed and motivated academic workforce maximizes their contributions to their students and schools. They further argued that committed academic staff who believe they are doing meaningful work are intrinsically motivated. They posited that meaningful work is intrinsically motivating and consequently more likely to result in commitment than work that is not meaningful and theories not intrinsically motivating. A motivated academic staff is often enthusiastic about student, about his teaching and about the school in which he was employed (Atkinson, 2000). A motivated academic staff encourages his students and believes he could produce positive outcomes. Therefore, excellence, progress and good image of a school system would be assessed when authorities in the school recognize the need for motivation of the academic workforce which should come intrinsically and extrinsically.

4. Conclusions

This study came to the conclusion that organizations such as academic institutions can only survive and grow when it appreciates the significance of motivation as an important factor in employees' performance and retention. It subjectively hold the view that management in the academic field should allow some level of participation by employees in terms of decision making and also be prepared to offer small, but consistent reward packages for employees as reward for hard work e.g. giving of annual bonuses (incentives). The study further posits that organization's workforce would perform better when management set clear and specific goals for employees to work with. The commitment of employees in an organization is seen to be directly related to motivation.

5. Recommendations

In light of the above discussion, the following recommendations are made:

1) Recognition of great work done by employees by management in the academic settings at all levels
2) Management of academic institutions should try to, as a matter of necessity, set small, clear, achievable goals and provide a real boost of motivation each time one is achieved.
3) Applaud result – This does not mean management need to give a standing ovation to every employee who made it to work on time, but it is crucial that school management let the academic workforce know exactly how much each of their contributions move the organization forward.
4) Communication – it is expected that management of academic institutions communicate responsibly and effectively any information academic workforce need to perform their jobs most efficiently.
5) Provide clarity – it is vital management in the academic world ensure employees understand the goals they are

after, in order to be motivated to achieve them. It is nearly impossible for the workforce to invest genuine motivation into something they are unaware of, or confused about.

6) University management and other academic institutions should give some level of autonomy to their workforce to exercise; management should let them know what need to be done by what deadline, then allow them to decide when to do the actual.

7) The safety of the workforce in the academic field should be considered by management as a thing of utmost priority.

8) Universities and other institutions of learning should encourage teamwork among the academic workforce, considering the enormous benefits associated with it.

9) Management should be prepared to offer small, but consistent reward packages for employees as reward for hard work e.g. giving of annual bonuses (incentives).

10) Provision of opportunities for advancement.eg scholarships, training of staff and other supportive programs.

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