

EFFECTIVNESS OF WORK MOTIVATION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WORK OUTCOMES

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Abstract

The current paper is aimed at investigating and proving the link between motivation and various outcomes such as - a propensity for staying in the company; psychological tension among employees; pride of working in the current company; engagement; work satisfaction; initiative in work. Our main goal is to prove the direct link between, the so-called "match factor" and the work outcomes. The study was held in the form of a survey among two groups, totalling 596 respondents in various sectors of the economy. And the results were tested with regression analysis for proving a significant influence of the match factor. Based on the result testing, we concluded that there is a direct link between motivation and work outcomes.

Keywords: Motivation, work outcomes, workplace motivation

JEL Codes: M12, M54

Introduction

Ever since human behaviour started to interest scholars, motivation was the main topic. The problems of motivation are ever actualizing in numerous aspects, one of which is motivating people in their workplace. The tremendous interest in motivation in both social and work aspects has led to the formulation of numerous views when defining the term. For example, Latham and Pinder (2005), describe motivation as a psychological process, resultant from the interaction of the human and the environment (p. 486). This view is part of the theoretical current, accepting motivation as a constant interaction between humans and the environment. Alternately, Deckers (2010) describes motivation as a process of initiating, directing and maintaining goal-directed behaviour (p. 6). Hence, motivation can be a process, directing one's behaviour in a certain way, which could guarantee a given desired outcome. Pinder (2008), describes the motivation in the work process as a set of energetical powers, initiating the work behaviour and determining its power, direction, intensity and duration (p. 13). Therefore, motivation in the workplace could cause behaviour, which eventually could lead employees in a certain direction. The goal of human resource managers is to set the circumstances in such a way, that the directed behaviour is in favour of the company. Another way of viewing motivation is as a constant chase of certain goals, which are a result of a given physiological or psychological needs. Motivation as well can be described as a process of taking a voluntary decision to undertake a particular purposeful action or inaction under given circumstances. It is subjective, runs within an individual's mind, and is reduced to the personal appraisal of all the impacts on him/her, of the signals sent by the economic, organizational and social environment of the enterprise (Dimitrova & Sotirova, p. 168).

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Consequently, motivation is a vastly complex problem within managing people, which at the same time is of great importance. Ivanov and Usheva (2021a) combined the most popular views and defined motivation as directing psychological processes, built by various energetic powers, having the goal to affect behaviour in a way, determining the direction, intensity and persistence of an individual's behaviour (p. 98). There are many more views in the field, but further investigating on the matter is not necessary for the current paper.

Namely, the big importance of the current topic has led to tremendous interest in motivation among scholars. Many theories and theoretical currents are formulated through many years of work. In the further part of the paper, we will give examples of the most popular theories in motivation along with a brief intro into each of them. Later, we will give examples of a certain influence of motivation in work outcomes, which is namely our main goal in the current study.

Our aim in the paper is to investigate and provide proof of the influence of ineffective motivation in work on certain work outcomes. For doing so, we surveyed various organizations. The greater part of the respondents was a part of a railway company, located in Bulgaria. There were respondents from various kinds of companies, data of which will be provided below. For evaluation of motivation in work, we formulated a coefficient, which had the goal to describe the difference between employees' desires and their acquisitions in work. Hence, we were able to investigate the influence of motivation on the outcomes, that we chose to study. Therefore, our main hypothesis in the study is that there is a statistically significant influence of motivation on work outcomes.

Motivational influences in workplace environment

Many authors have proven the direct link between motivation and peoples' performance in their work (Latham, 2012). Therefore, human motivation could have a serious effect on the execution of labour. In the practical environment, motivation could be influenced by vastly diverse factors. Such as – personality traits (Bipp, 2010, p. 29); autonomy support (Gillet at all, 2017, p. 1167); leadership empowerment (Zhang & Bartol, 2010, p. 17); age and lifespan (Kanfer & Ackerman, 2004, p. 455-456), social interaction and cultural dependencies (Wood & Bandura, 1989, p. 378-380), (Bandura, 2002, p. 280-282), (Roe et all, 2000, p. 675-677). Based on the last, Ivanov and Usheva (2021b), concluded that many of the factors influencing motivation can have a great influence on work outcomes, namely because of the strong connection between work motivation and work outcomes (p. 86). Therefore, bearing in mind, the above mentioned and empirically proven factors, influencing motivation, we can state, that everything linked with motivation is of great importance for human management practice.

To underline the vast interest in the field of motivation theory and research, we would like to pay attention to the different motivational theories, formulated in the past. Of course, this will be only a brief intro to the most influential theories, which has had great influence not only to the theory of Behavioural psychology but as well on the theory of Management.

Maybe the most influential and popular view of motivation is the theory of Maslow. Maslow (1954) defined the whole process of motivation as a constantly chasing of the fulfilment of certain needs. He groups the needs into five categories, which are hierarchal ordered and the only possible way for an individual to go to a higher level is to fulfil his "lower needs". This is known as a frustration-progression process. For the time being, Maslow's theory of motivation had his applications.

Based on his critic of the hierarchy of motivation, Alderfer (1969) formulated his theory. He acknowledges three groups of needs - defines three groups of needs – Existence; Relatedness; Growth (pp. 142-175). The most important aspect of his theory is the frustration-regression process, which means, that the individual will try to fulfil his most concrete needs. This, in often cases, means to leave the "higher needs" to fulfil the needs, which at this moment are more concrete.

Another author, which had a great influence on the theory of motivation is Herzberg (1968). He is one of the first authors, which researched within a work environment. Based on his famous study among engineers and accountants, he formulated his theory and stated that motivation is a

process of constant synergy between motivational and hygiene factors. According to his work, hygiene factors are only a reason for a lack of dissatisfaction and cannot lead to satisfaction. Vice versa, motivational factors are the only expedient path for work satisfaction.

The work of McClelland influenced the field of motivational theory in a significant way as well. The basic statement in his theory is that the levels of motivation are highly dependent on the urge to achieve. Or as the author states – people with the high necessity for achievement get faster to promotions, because of the active seeking of ways for working better. Companies, in which there are many such individuals, grow faster. Countries, in which there are many such fast-growing companies, usually, achieve above the average economic growth (McClelland, 2013). Consequently, achievement motivation among workers could lead to higher diligence in work, higher engagement and overall better results.

Not all scholars view motivation as the process of ever actualizing needs which the individual need to fulfil to get satisfaction. Some such as Lawler and Porter (1967); Locke, Latham and Erez (1988); Latham and Pinder (2005); Oldham and Hackman (1981); etc. Describe motivation as a constant interaction between the individual and the environment. Nonetheless, further investigation in all theories is not necessary for the current study.

Work outcomes could be highly influenced by the application of the motivators in the aspect of the previously mentioned views of motivation. The results of the annual survey of the organization "World at work", proved, that in the modern world, the most common practically applied form of motivation is the material stimulation, based on the scheme, known as "Pay for performance" (World at work, 2019, p. 12). Although the data provided is from 2019, this tendency is maintained through 2020 and the beginning of 2021. The scheme "Pay for performance", can be described as paying more for better performance. Hence, there is a linear correlation, in this simulation model, between performance and material stimulations in work. Nonetheless, ever since the work of Maslow and especially Herzberg, it has been acknowledged that material stimulation is not a source of work satisfaction among a certain group of employees. Some authors go even further and state that material stimulation could suppress human motivation in a significant way (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 229); (Gagne & Deci, 2005). Furthermore, scholars have proven that most of the positive work outcomes are positively correlated with intrinsic motivation and negatively related to negative work outcomes. Controversially, external motivation is not associated at all or negatively associated with positive work outcomes and positively associated with negative work outcomes (Kuvaas, Buch, Weibel, Dysvik & Nerstad, 2017, p. 251). Hence, material stimulation can have an insignificant work improvement or even could lead to a significant decline in work performance. Consequently, work-related motivational schemes should acknowledge the wide variety of human needs, material and non-material. In addition, practitioners must apply such forms of stimulation, which have the potential to lead to a higher state of human development and skill improvement.

Pay is a vital part of human motivation. Yet, as we stated, it cannot be the only source of human motivation. There are certain lines of work, where schemes, that include pay for performance incentives are vital for better performance of employees. For example, Kuvaas, Buch, Gagne and Dysvik, (2016) conducted a study among salespeople, concluded that pay for performance schemes are positively related to self-reported work effort and negatively related to turnover intentions among workers (p. 672). Hence, among salespeople pay can play a vital role while striving for better work results. Moreover, in certain conditions, pay for performance is expected to positively influence positive work outcomes and negatively influence negative outcomes.

Additionally, there is proof for the controversially. For example, Olafsen, Deci and Halvari (2017) state, that people are not motivated by the results, which are a consequence of the taken action and the good execution of the task. They tend to take actions, which are interesting and have more deep meaning for them (p. 179). Hence, in some conditions pay could not lead to higher effort. Moreover, Deci and Ryan (2000) report a meta-analytic study, examining the influence of material rewards on intrinsic motivation. The study proves that not only all monetary rewards but also all tangible rewards, significantly diminish intrinsic motivation (p. 234). Therefore, payment must be

applied very careful while motivating employees. While it comes to intrinsic motivation, which is often described as more stable within the workplace, leaders have to use monetary stimulation, only in a certain way, while leaving the possibilities of higher human development.

Leadership is one of the most influential aspects in practice, which can have a significant role and form certain motivational paradigms in the workplace. It can affect the values in work in such a way that they could influence significantly the requirements in the motivational aspect of the employees. In line with this, Van Tuin, Schaufeli and Van den Broeck (2021), conducted a study providing evidence that engaging leadership can positively affect intrinsic values, through need satisfaction, as well as it could result in higher engagement in work (p. 15). Consequently, leadership can have a serious effect on motivation, when it comes to values forming and need satisfaction in the workplace. In line with the work of Van Tuin et. all (2021), Van Tuin, Schaufeli and Van Rhenen (2020), stated that engaging leadership is associated with work motivation and engagement through needs satisfaction and autonomy satisfaction in particular because autonomy fosters positive outcomes and decreases adverse outcomes (p. 19). Hence, leaders could play a vital role in the motivation of the personnel. Leaders can contribute significantly to better results through better motivational practices, but they can also diminish almost every good effort of workers if they apply unsuitable forms of motivation to practice. Moreover, the managers are the ones who need to investigate and implement the most effective forms of motivation. Therefore, it can be concluded, that the goal of the manager is to motivate the employees so that they perform the work in the best way to achieve the goals of the company. (Filipova, 2011, p. 137). In addition, Yaneva claims, that an integral part of the strategic decision-making process in the organization is the study of the indicators related to the employees' development and motivation (2021, p. 170).

Feedback is a part of the work environment that can have a significant influence on the motivation of the personnel. Providing certain levels of feedback in work could diminish or flourish human performance. For example, in a meta-analytic study Fong, Patall, Vasquez and Srauberg (2019), concluded that in numerous of the empirical studies they have examined, the negative feedback undermines intrinsic motivation in a significant way (p. 124). Hence, once the negative feedback is applied in the workplace, it could lead to a serious diminish of the intrinsic motivation, and consequently to less effort in work in the future. Furthermore, Belschak and Hartdog (2009), concluded that positive feedback, publicly or privately given, will lead to positive effects on the emotional state of the workers. Controversially, negative feedback will lead to a negative emotional state, even more so, if given publicly. Therefore, feedback as a part of the work environment can have a significant influence on human motivation and accordingly on work performance. Moreover, Dimitrova (2020) argues, that positions with higher quality that provide feedback, opportunities for self-control and learning are a good opportunity to strengthen the internal motivation of employees.

Human motivation is a very complex process, influenced by a wide variety of factors within the work environment. As we examined above, motivation can be the source either of greater work effort and better overall work results, or a hindrance of such. We concluded that the factors, which influence motivation, have the power also to influence work outcomes in the process of applying labour force in the company. Therefore, we formulated our study from the foundation of these postulates. As we will examine in the further sections of the current article, motivation can have a significant influence on the work outcomes, which we examined.

Methodology

Our study was held in two different forms, examining two different groups of respondents. In the first part respondents were part of a wide variety of industries (manufacturing industry, transport and logistics, energy, trade and commerce, IT, etc.) (n1=145). The second part of the respondents is part of a governmentally owned railway company (n2=451). The type of industries and the actual respondents were chosen with a random selection. The main goal for which, was to provide enough vastly diverse results when examining the motivation in the workplace. The number of the

respondents has been calculated from the total fully and properly filled surveys for each group separately. The research was held for two months in the year 2020.

In our study, we examined motivation by selecting numerous motivators in the workplace environment. For a better understanding of the motivation in the companies at hand, we divided the motivators into 6 modules, as follow - 1. **Work Environment (WE)**; 2. **Remuneration (R)**; 3. **Safety (S)**; 4. **Personal development (PD)**; 5. **Affiliation and social aspects (ASP)**; 6. **Respect and self-respect Interest and challenge, autonomy and leadership (RS; IC; AL)**.

In the first part of the survey, we asked our respondents for the most subjectively valuable motivators for them. We achieved this using a five-point Likert scale, allowing us to analyse the results quantitatively. Hence, we were able to calculate the average attestation for each of the modules. In the second part of the survey, we asked respondents to report the actual application in their work of the formally mentioned modules. Lastly, we compared the results, formulating a coefficient, which we called "Match factor", which had the goal to describe the actual match between the preferred forms of motivation and the applied in the workplace. The formulation of the formerly mentioned coefficient is fully an idea of the author and does not profess full and undisputable clarity and unconditional application in motivational theory. The formulation of the coefficient is an attempt to attestation the effectiveness of the motivation in our response groups. Calculation of the "Match factor" is made by dividing the total average from the results of the subjective attestation for the importance of a given element of the formulated module and its actual application in the work environment. These calculations were performed for each of the respondents, allowing us to achieve also a regression analyses between the coefficient for the effectiveness of motivation and the work outcomes. The formulation and calculation of the match factor led to the conclusion that if the match factor is with value 1, there is a perfect match between the preferred and applied motivational elements. Consequently, if the match factor is greater than 1, there is a mismatch in favour of more preferred elements and less applied. Controversially, if the match factor is less than 1, there is a mismatch in favour of more applied elements than preferred.

The third part of our survey had the goal to evaluate in subjective means the opinion of the workers regarding certain work outcomes, we formulated for the study. Namely, they are - the propensity for staying in the company (**PSW**); psychological tension among employees (**PSYTENS**); pride of working in the current company (**PRIDE**); engagement (**ENGAGE**); work satisfaction (**SATISF**); initiative in work (**INIT**). Each of the outcomes was evaluated by asking the respondents, questions and inviting them to evaluate each with a scale. The questions for each outcome are as follow:

- Propensity of staying at work – If it is up to you, you will work in your current company after 5 years.
- Psychological tension – Do you have the feeling that you are working in a psychologically tense environment.
- Pride of working in the company: It is a pride for you to work in the current company.
- Engagement – To what degree do you feel engaged with the work and overall results of your company.
- Satisfaction – Please evaluate your overall satisfaction from work!
- Initiative – Please express your readiness for engaging in a task and overall initiative!

After the evaluation of the work outcomes, we conducted a regression and correlational analysis to find any statistically significant influence of the match factor in the aspect of motivation in the workplace and the formally mentioned work outcomes.

Hence, we formulate the following hypothesizes:

Hypothesis 1: The match factor is influencing the propensity of staying in the company.

Hypothesis 2: The match factor is influencing the psychological tension in the company.

Hypothesis 3: The match factor is influencing the pride of working in the company.

Hypothesis 4: The match factor is influencing engagement in work.

Hypothesis 5: The match factor is influencing work satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6: The match factor is influencing work satisfaction.

For testing the hypothesizes, we conducted a simple regression analysis, using Microsoft Excel. In our analysis, the independent variable is the match factor and our dependent variables are the work outcomes. For better clarity and better results, we conducted regression analysis separately for each work outcome.

Results and discussion

We conducted the analyses in the two groups separately. We provide the results in tables as follows below.

Table 1: Regression results of the match factor and work outcomes in first group

Significants and correlation	PSW	PSYTENS	PRIDE	ENGAGE	SATISF	INIT
P	0,0007	0,12	8,53471E-05	0,65	0.0003	0.05
r	-0,31	0,02	-0,13	0,0019	-0.11	-0.03

Source: Own research

The results shown in Table 1 are relevant to the group which had respondents with various employment. As we can see first-hand, we can either prove or reject the hypothesizes. As it is known from the statistical science, if the P-value (statistical significands) is higher than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant influence by the dependent invariable, in our case the match factor, and the depended variable, in our case the work outcomes.

Therefore, in the first group, we can accept our *first hypothesis* because the results proved a statistically significant influence by the match factor and the propensity of staying in work. As we can see by the correlation coefficient the influence is negative. Hence, with the increasing mismatch in motivation within our first group of respondents, the propensity of staying in the company decreases. It wasn't found any significant influence from the match factor on the psychological tension. Therefore, we reject our *second hypothesis* in the first group of respondents. Based on the results, we can accept our *third hypothesis*, because there was a proven statistically significant influence by the match factor on the pride of working for the company. We reject our *fourth hypothesis*, as there was no proven statistically significant influence by the match factor on engagement in our first group. We accept our *fifth and sixth hypotheses*, as we proved a statistically significant influence by the match factor on satisfaction from work and initiative. As we can see, in both cases the correlational coefficient describes a negative connection. Hence, with the increase of the mismatch in the motivation in our first group, there will be an expected decline in satisfaction and initiative.

There were some differences within the results in the two groups of respondents. We represent the results for the group of respondents, employed in a governmentally owned railway company in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Regression results of the match factor and work outcomes in second group, employed in governmentally owned railway company

Significands and correlation	PSW	PSYTENS	PRIDE	ENGAGE	SATISF	INIT
P	1,1708E-14	1,33E-08	2,2043E-08	3,93568E-07	4,1092E-12	6,7047E-06
r	-0,13	0,07	-0,08	-0,06	-0.11	-0.03

Source: Own research

As we can see in Table 2, we can accept *Hypothesis 1 to 6*, as there is a statistically significant influence of the match factor on the examined work outcomes. As we can see there is a negative connection between the match factor and propensity of staying in work, pride, engagement, satisfaction and initiative. Therefore, we can conclude that as the mismatch in motivation in our second group increases, the formally mentioned work outcomes, decline. There is a positive connection between the match factor and the psychological tension. We did expect a positive relationship with the psychological tension. Hence, with the increase of the mismatch in work motivation, the sensation of psychological tension in work increases.

Except for the formally mentioned influences by the match factor on the various work outcomes, Ivanov and Usheva (2021b), provided proof of high interdependency between the examined work outcomes. They proved the strong connection between the work outcomes themselves and linking them with one another. Hence, we can conclude that except for the influence of the match factor, the work outcomes could be influenced by the rest of the outcomes described above.

Conclusion

Motivation is an exceptionally important concept within the management of human resources. There are many views and hence, many different definitions of the term. Nonetheless, most of the authors describe motivation as a set of energetic powers, having the goal to affect behaviour in a way, determining the direction, intensity and persistence of an individual's behaviour. Therefore, motivation should be accepted as an externally for the individual process, which leads him to a certain direction. Motivation should be accepted, as well as, an internally initiated process, coming from the internally initiated personal goals of the individual.

The high interest in motivation among scholars is justified by the high importance on the matter not only in human resource management but as well in organizational psychology and other disciplines. The reasons for the chosen direction of the behaviour can have a significant influence on work performance in almost every industry. A better understanding of motivation can be the source of better motivational programs, better and greater work abilities, and therefore, better work results in general. Consequently, empirical studies, as the one formulated for the current research are of high importance for the practical application of motivational programs in various industries.

Based on the results of our research, we can conclude that there is a rather low motivational effectiveness through the two groups examined. Moreover, we can state that there is a statistically significant influence by the match factor (motivational effectiveness) on almost every work outcome in the first group and every outcome from our second group of respondents. Hence, almost fully proving our formulated hypothesis in the first group, and fully proving our hypothesis in the second group of respondents. Moreover, as the influence is significant it is negative within the positive work outcomes and positive with the negative work outcomes, such as the psychological tension. Therefore, we can conclude that the ineffectiveness in human motivation can lead to lower levels in the positive work outcomes and higher levels in the negative work outcomes. Eventually, this could lead to higher stress levels, lower engagement with work, turnover intentions, less pride from working for the company, lesser satisfaction and worse initiative from workers. This tendency could eventually lead to worse overall work results and consequently, to worse competitiveness levels. This will be worse in industries, which are highly dependent on the better work of their employees. Moreover, in the current economic conditions, such industries are the majority. Therefore, managers must look into the motivation of their employees, and provide a dynamical synergy between material and nonmaterial stimulation, and at the same time take into account the employee's motivational requirements.

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