

MOTIVATION – ARE THERE LIMITS TO WHAT CAN BE ACHIEVED?

Sukma Putra¹
Flinders University

ABSTRACT

Motivation is the underlying reason for an act committed by an individual. A highly motivated person is someone who has a very strong reason to achieve what he wanted to do in his current job. Two main types of motivation are said to be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from inside an individual rather than from any external or outside rewards, while extrinsic motivation is a construct that pertains whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome. If we as an individual doing something based on our willingness and eagerness, it is believed that we can achieve our objectives. It is true there are no limits to what we can achieve, but there are some key factors that can affect the motivation and this can become a limit to what can we achieve. It is clear that what affects the motivation is the motive itself and there is an important factor that can affect the employees' motivation at work, which is compensation. Nevertheless, it is also believed since the compensation are made and controlled by organization and leader this can become the main factor of what can be achieved. Therefore, the ideal effort for leaders to motivate their employees is to get more concentrations on intrinsic motivation for making employees happy and enjoy, or convincing their self efficiency in working their tasks.

Keywords: *intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, compensation.*

¹ Alumni of Flinders University (putr0016@flinders.edu.au)

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is related to the objectives to be achieved. However, to achieve the objectives needs an effort, while what makes the effort is the motive itself as a driving force or a pusher. "Motivation is a process that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward achieving a goal" (Robbins, 2003). Based on Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, theory X and Y by Douglas McGregor and the contemporary theories of motivation, motivation is the underlying reason for an act committed by an individual. A highly motivated person is someone who has a very strong reason to achieve what he wanted to do in his current job. Motivation affected by some key factor that can become a limit such as compensation in the organisational context and the motive itself as a personal. This paper will explain the types of motivations, the limits in motivation and what can affect the motivation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Types of Motivation

Intrinsic Motivation

Buchanan & Huczynski (1997) defines motivation as the internal psychological process of initiating, energizing, directing and maintaining goal-directed behaviour. Motivation is said to be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from inside an individual rather than from any external or outside rewards, such as money or grades. An intrinsically motivated person will work on a math equation, for example, because it is enjoyable. Or an intrinsically motivated person will work on a solution to a problem because the challenge of finding a solution is provides a sense of pleasure. In neither case does the person work on the task because there is some reward involved, such as a prize, a payment, or in the case of students, a grade. It can be summed up that intrinsic motivation is to doing an activity simply for the enjoyment of the activity itself, rather than its instrumental value.

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation was implicitly explained in the intrinsic motivation definition. Extrinsic motivation is a construct that pertains

whenever an activity is done in order to attain some separable outcome (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Motivation has a positive relationship with work performance. In other words, strong motivation creates maximum performance. However, it also reckoned that these two factors have dependency with compensation. Extrinsic motivation was implicitly explained in the intrinsic motivation definition. It comes from the external factor of an individual. Even when the workers only have less interest on a task, the reward externalize from the task can be something that makes the workers extrinsically motivated. In other words, workers will only do a task if they are rewarded. Therefore, if people only work for extrinsic motivation, are the variables related to extrinsic motivation can become a limit to achieve their work objectives? What are the variables that really connected with extrinsic motivation? This is another question that writer will focus about.

Compensation: A Limit?

Compensation is very important for employees because the amount of compensation can increase employee motivation itself. Bernardin and Russel (1993) also indicated that compensation has a great influence in motivation, productivity, and employee turnover rate. There are two types of compensation, financial compensation and non-financial compensation. Financial compensation related with financial benefit such as bonuses and salary. This compensation determined as a primary factor which trigger the extrinsic motivation. It is obvious that in an organization most employees were driven by extrinsic motivation to do their job. However, the expectations from employees are bigger now, and they only want to do things if they have something from doing it. Sherman (1996) indicated the general purposes of the compensation policy and one of the purposes is to motivate employees. When employees are motivated, it is likely to achieve strategic objectives for the organization. The organization has a greater possibility to magnetize, motivate and retain employees if the compensation scheme is based on positions or skills that are appropriate to the position. Non-financial compensation is also important for achieving the aim of organizations when the monetary compensation needs to be decreased.

Financial Compensation

Financial compensation can be determined as salary, bonus, incentive and benefit. This compensation is positively proven can increase the

motivation and the work performance of employees. Abraham Maslow (1954) also explained in his hierarchy of need that employees in organization have different kind of needs. For example, many employees think that career development is one thing that they should have in their organization. Nevertheless, the major motive is to get more salary, bonus and incentives. While the minority employees need it just for self actualization. Usually, motivation generates from some need that leads to behavior that results in some type of reward when the need is fulfilled (Shanks, 2007).

Non-Financial Compensation

This compensation refers to the essential of the job and the job environment. The essential of the job cover the job itself. The job should be interesting, challenging and might have opportunity for employees recognition. The job environment associated with the working policies, the working condition, job sharing, comfortable, supervisor and supporting facilities such as cafeteria. In author previous research in one of the Profit organisation in Jakarta in 2005, 80% of the workers stated that their work performance and motivation driven by the direct compensation. In other words, if there is no direct compensation, it will decrease the motivation and the work performance.

DISCUSSION

There is a quote said “There is no limit to what we can achieve once we put our mind and heart to it” (n.a). That quote indicate; if we as an individual doing something based on our willingness and eagerness, it is believed that we can achieve our objectives. It more looks like to evoke the intrinsic motivation from our self. It is true there are no limits to what we can achieve, but there are some key factors (in this case compensation) that can affect the motivation and this can become a limit to what can we achieve. Nowadays, most organisations will agree that compensation can be use to motivate the workers more. Direct compensation is the most valuable thing for employees because it can motivate and increase their work performance.

Douglas McGregor (1957) said, that there are two types of human, namely: Theory X (the negative things about people) and the other is Theory Y (is basically about all the positives). Theory X people seems

like lazy and will prefer to avoid work. This kind of individuals needs more compensation to get driven and a direction from the manager to do a task. While the theory Y can be describe as a person who is ambitious and self-motivated in doing his job. The implication of McGregor's theory on organization theory is the argument that assumptions in theory Y are preferred and those assumptions inside the theory Y should be able to guide managers to design their organization and motivate its employees. It is doubted that we can provoke more intrinsic motivation in organizations to create more people from theory Y since the intrinsic will not moved without the willingness and the eagerness of the person itself.

Developing McGregor's theory, Frederick Irving Herzberg (1993) emphasized that there are to two factors theory that can affect the motivation, which is the motivation and hygiene factor. This theory explain that there are certain factor that can affect employees in their work environment which some may lead to job satisfaction and some will create dissatisfaction. The motivation theory from Herzberg underlined the achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, promotion and growth as a factor that can motivate employees intrinsically whereas the hygiene factor explained the pay and benefits, company policy and administration, relationships with co-workers, and supervision are indicated as extrinsic motivation. Therefore, to motivate employees we need both motivations, extrinsic and intrinsic. Both can be generated from the compensation. To generate the extrinsic, we can use the financial compensation, and for intrinsic we can affected it by giving the non-financial compensation.

Another interesting fact that author found during the class of Theory of Organizational Change, which develop another questions for compensation is about "who made the rules?" and "how the rules use?" brought a deep synchronization between organization, leader, power, and the motivation itself. Motivation somehow related how the organization and the leader use their power appropriately to create such a motivated people in their workplace. These factors (organization and leader) can become other limits to what we can achieve in organization, and the compensation is always based on leader and organization policy.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that what affects the motivation is the motive itself and there is an important factor that can affect the employees' motivation at work, which is compensation. Nevertheless, it is also believed since the compensation are made and controlled by organization and leader this can become the main factor of what can be achieved. Therefore, the ideal effort for leaders to motivate their employees is to get more concentrations on intrinsic motivation for making employees happy and enjoy, or convincing their self efficiency in working their tasks. To be valued as a worker, to have a same position as other workers, and to be heard by the employer are the main things that workers need in their organisations. People who intrinsically motivated are connected for its own sake, out of interest, or for the pleasure and satisfaction derived from their experience (Osteloh & Frey, 1999). As long as the employees have more intrinsic motivation, support from the leader and the organization itself, the employees will have no limits to what can be achieved in their workplace.

Limitation

This essay was only based on writer's previous limited research and did not cover all the specific aspects of the limitations of the motivation. Additionally, there are no further investigations about what are the limits of intrinsic or extrinsic motivation that contributes to work performance. As a result, extrinsic can be measure easily because it's all about financial compensation. However, it is difficult to identify and measure which component of intrinsic motivation contributes higher in organizations. It is considered in future research to examine the impact of intrinsic motivation to increase the work performance in organisations depends on how the leaders lead. Previous study indicated that the intrinsic motivation have positive relation with working performance in most companies.

REFERENCES

Shanks, N. H., (2007). *Management and motivation*. (p. 24). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning. DOI:
www.jblearning.com/samples/076373473x/3473x_ch02_4759.pdf

Bernardin, H. J. & Joyce E. A. R. (1993). *Human resource mangement: An experiential approach*. Singapore: McGraw-Hill International, Inc.

Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. B. (1993). *The motivation to work*. New Brunswick: Transaction Pub.

Osterloh, M., & Frey, B. S. (2000). Motivation, knowledge transfer, and organizational forms. *11*(5), 538-550.

Retrieve from

<http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2640344?uid=3737536&uid=2&uid=4&sid=21100705551411>.

Sherman, Arthur W., Jr. Et al., (1996). *Managing Human Resources*. USA; South Western College Publishing, An International Thomson Publishing Company.

<http://genleadership.com/how-to-motivate-yourself/#more-22>