Motivation and Employees' Performance in the Public and Private Sectors in Nigeria

Chukwudi Francis Anyim (Corresponding author)

FCIPM., FNIM., FABS, FCAI

Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management,

Faculty of Business Administration

University of Lagos

Tel: +23-48033468317   E-mail: chucksanyim2004@yahoo.com

Odogwu Christopher Chidi

Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management,

Faculty of Business Administration

University of Lagos

Tel: +23-480-2303-4213   E-mail: krischidi2002@yahoo.com

Adedehinbo Ekundayo Badejo

Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management,

Faculty of Business Administration

University of Lagos

Tel: +23-480-3446-5650   E-mail: dbadejo@yahoo.com

Abstract

Human resource management is aimed at getting the best from the employees and creating an environment where job satisfaction and performance can be enhanced. Organisations in both the public and private sectors in Nigeria have goals which can only be achieved by pressing the right button and stimulating the employees to get the desired result through the process of motivation. This paper examines motivation and employees' performance in the public and private sectors in Nigeria. The authors identified factors that could guarantee job satisfaction on the part of the employees and also enhance job performance. In conclusion, the authors hold the view that if the recommendations in this paper are adopted, they will benefit both the employers and employees immensely in performance improvements in these sectors of the Nigerian economy.

Keywords: Motivation, Employees' Performance, Public and Private Sectors

1. Introduction

The management of people at work is an integral part of the management process. To understand the critical importance of people in the organisation is to recognise that the human element and the organisation are synonymous. Some managers do not appreciate the fact that employees have to be motivated to put in their best so that the goals and objectives of the organisation can be achieved. As a result of the prevailing economic and labour market situation in Nigeria; whereby supply of labour is greater than its demand, some employers do not believe in effective motivation of workers in producing high performance. They even uphold the view that if workers are not properly motivated they cannot leave the job since there is scarcity of job in the labour market. Besides, most employers are not effective in their

leadership behaviour. They treat workers as machines believing that issues concerning workers should be handled with levity.

The objective of this paper is to examine   motivation and employees' performance in the public and private sectors in Nigeria; and to make recommendations on how employees could be effectively motivated in both the public and private sectors for result-oriented performance and national development.

2. Literature Review

There is an avalanche of literature on motivation and motivational theories. Content theories provide some insights into people's needs and help in the understanding of what people will   (and will   not) value as work motivation. There are four content theories: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two Factor theory, Alderfer's Three Part Hierarchy of Needs and McClelland's Achievement Motivation theory (Robbins, Millel, Caccioppe & Water-Marsh, 2001).

2.1 Maslow's-Hierarchy of Needs Theory

This theory was proposed by Abraham Maslow (1943) and is based on the assumption that people are motivated by a series of five universal needs. These needs are hierarchically ranked according to the order in which they influence human behaviour.

- Physiological or Basic needs: are deemed to be the lowest– level needs. These needs include the needs such as food and water. So long as physiological needs are unsatisfied, they exist as a driving or motivating force in a person's life. A hungry person has a felt need. This felt need sets up both psychological and physical tensions that manifest themselves in overt behaviours directed at reducing those tensions (getting something to eat).

- Safety or Security needs: the needs for shelter and security – become the motivators of human behaviour. Safety needs include a desire for security, stability, dependency, protection, freedom from fear and anxiety, and a need for structure, order and law.

- Social needs or Belongingness: include the need for belongingness and love. Generally, as gregarious creatures, human have a need to belong. In the workplace, this need may be satisfied by an ability to interact with one's co-workers and perhaps to be able to work collaboratively with these colleagues.

- Egoistic or Esteem needs: become the motivating needs. Esteem needs include the desire for self-respect, self-esteem and the esteem of others. When focused externally, these needs also include the desire for reputation, prestige, status, fame, glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance and appreciation.

- Self-actualization needs: The highest need in Maslow's hierarchy is that of self actualization the need for self-realization, continuous self-development and the process of becoming all that a person is capable of becoming.

<Figure 1 about here>

2.2 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

This is also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, which was derived from a study designed to test the concept that people have two sets of needs:

- Their needs as animals to avoid pain: and

- Their needs as humans to grow psychologically.

- Herzberg (1966) study consisted of a series of interviews that sought to elicit response to the questions:

- Recall a time when you felt exceptionally good about your job. Why did you feel that way about the job? Did this feeling affect your job performance in any way? Did this feeling have an impact on your personal relationships or your well-being?

- Recall a time on the job that resulted in negative feelings? Describe the sequence of events that resulted in these negative feelings.

From the outcome of the investigation, it was found that workers' happiness and unhappiness at work are based on two separate themes:

1. Satisfiers (Motivators): Five factors stood out as strong determinants of job satisfaction: achievements, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement. The last three factors were found to be most important for bringing about lasting changes in attitude. It should be noted that recognition refers to recognition for achievement as opposed to recognition in the human relations sense.

2. Dissatisfiers (Hygiene Factors): The determinants of job dissatisfaction were found to be: company policy, administrative policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions. From the results, Herzberg (1966) concludes that the response people gave when they felt good about their jobs were significantly different from the response given when they felt bad. Certain characteristics tend to be consistently related to job satisfaction and others to job dissatisfaction. Intrinsic factors, such as work itself, responsibility and achievement seem to be related to job satisfaction. On the other hand, dissatisfied respondents tended to cite extrinsic factors such as supervision, pay, company policies and working condition.

According to Herzberg (1966), the factors leading to job satisfaction are separate and distinct from those that lead to job dissatisfaction. Therefore, managers who seek to eliminate factors that can create job dissatisfaction may bring about peace but not necessarily motivation. They will be placating their workforce rather than motivating them. As a result, conditions surrounding the job such as quality of supervision, pay, company policies, physical working condition, relations with others and job security were characterised by Herzberg as hygiene factors. When they are adequate, people will not be dissatisfied; neither will they be satisfied. If we want to motivate people on their jobs, Herzberg suggested factors associated with the work itself or with the outcomes directly derived from it, such as promotional opportunities, opportunities for personal growth, recognition, responsibility and achievement. These are the characteristics that people find intrinsically rewarding.

<Figure 2 about here>

2.3 Alderfer's Three -Part Hierarchy of Needs

Closely related to Maslow's theory is the ERG theory. Alderfer (1972) developed his ERG theory, which refers to the need for existence, relatedness and growth. Alderfer's theory of motivation is a constriction of Maslow's theory. He based his theory on the "ERG" theory. 'E' means Existence needs which include the physiological needs as proposed by Maslow; 'R' means Relatedness needs which include Maslow social and egoistic needs and 'G' means Growth needs which include Maslow's self-actualization needs which involves the desire to be creative and to achieve full potential in the existing environment.

2.4 Maslow's vs. Alderfer's Theory

• Contents: Maslow's theory was based on five needs whereas Alderfer's theory was based on three needs.
• Process terms: While Maslow talked of fulfilment-progression, Alderfer talked of both fulfilment- progression and frustration-regression. That is, when a need is difficult to satisfy the individual regresses towards more easily satisfied needs.
• Maslow's theory maintained that each need is satisfied one after the other but Alderfer's theory maintained that two needs can operate contemporaneously or simultaneously.

Existence needs broadly correspond to levels 1 and 2 of Maslow's theory; Relatedness needs broadly correspond to levels 3 and 4 of Maslow's theory and Growth needs correspond to level 5 of Maslow's theory. Alderfer argues that once a lower-order need is satisfied, there is an increased desire to satisfy a higher-order need and this will increase the longer this need remain unsatisfied. He also argues that, if higher-order needs are not satisfied, lower-level needs may become more desirable and more than one need may be operating at the same time.

2.5 McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory

McClelland developed a concept of motivation based on the human need for achievement. This need to achieve has been abbreviated by McClelland as n-Ach. He asserted that people with a high need for achievement motive have a compelling desire for success and an equally intense fear of failure. According to him the characteristics of a person with a high n- Ach are as follows:
• He sets moderately difficult but achievable goals for himself.
• He takes 'calculated risks'
• He likes specific and prompt feedback on how he is doing
• He tends to be restless, works long hours and does not worry unduly about failure if it occurs
• He prefers competent co-workers in spite of his personal feelings about them.

What is most significant about n-Ach theory is McClelland's claim that the achievement motive can be developed and taught to under-achieving persons or groups in various cultures. McClelland (1961) focuses on three human needs (a) need for achievement; a learnt need to excel and succeed in life, (b) need for power, a learnt need to lead and change the behaviours and beliefs of others, (c) need for affiliation, a learnt need for social interaction with others. This theory revealed that intrinsic motivation is far more powerful in promoting performance when compared to extrinsic motivation.

3. Conceptual Framework

Motivation is the inner drive that channels human beings to achieve goals. Motivation is directly proportional to an individual's needs. On the surface, needs seem obvious. We all need food, shelter, love, self-esteem, and purpose. However, determining what constitutes a need is not nearly so obvious because a need cannot be completely isolated. Needs must be inferred from observable behaviour and then studied in context – the context being person in relation to environment.

Every employee is expected to show increase and qualitative performance. To achieve this, the behaviour of the employee is very important. The behaviour of the employees is influenced by the environment in which they find themselves. Furthermore, an employee's behaviour will be a function of that employee's innate drives or felt needs and the opportunities he or she has to satisfy those drives or needs in the workplace

<Figure 3 about here>

If employees are never given opportunities to utilise all of their skills, then the employer may never have the benefit of their total performance. Work performance is also contingent upon employee abilities. If employees lack the learned skills or innate talents to do a particular job, then performance will be less than optimal. A third dimension of performance is motivation.

<Figure 4 about here>

Motivation is the act of stimulating someone or oneself to get desired course of action or to push the right button to get desired reactions. From figure 4, performance can be seen as a function of motivation, ability and opportunity. Battu (2008) seems to share a similar view when he asserts that employee productivity is the result of a combination of employee ability, motivation, and work environment. When productivity falls off or more positively, when productivity improves–the change is usually traceable to enhanced skill, motivation, or a work environment conducive to high performance. In conclusion, Battu (2008) posits that if any of these three dimensions or factors is low, productivity is likely to suffer. Battu (2008) summarised the foregoing viewpoint through the equation below. Performance = f (ability, motivation, environment)

<Figure 5 about here>

4. Motivational Factors

There are several factors that motivate a person to work. The motivational factors can be broadly divided into two groups:

4.1 Monetary Factors

This comprises the following elements

4.1.1 Salaries or Wages

Salaries or wages is one of the most important motivational factors. Reasonable salaries must be paid on time. While fixing salaries, the organization must consider factors such as:

- Cost of living
- Company ability to pay
- Capability of company to pay etc.

4.1.2 Bonus

It refers to extra payment to employee over and above salary given as an incentive. The employees must be given adequate amount of bonus.

4.1.3 Incentives

The organization may also provide additional incentives such as medical allowance, educational allowance, etc.

4.1.4 Special individual Incentives

The company may provide special individual incentives. Such incentives are to be given to deserving employees for giving valuable suggestions.

4.2 Non Monetary Factors

This comprises the following elements:

4.2.1 Status or Job Title

By providing a higher status or designations the employee is thus motivated. Employees prefer and are proud of higher designations or titles.

4.2.2 Appreciation and Recognition

Employees must be appreciated for their services. The praise should not come from immediate superior but also from higher authorities.

4.2.3 Delegation of Authority

Delegation of authority motivates a subordinate to perform the tasks with dedication and commitment. When authority is delegated, the subordinate knows that his superior has placed faith and trust in him.

4.2.4 Working Conditions

Provision for better working conditions such as air-conditioned rooms, proper plant layout, proper sanitation, equipment, machines etc., motivates the employees.

4.2.5 Job Security

Guarantee of job security or lack of fear dismissal, etc can also be a good way to motivate the employees. Employees who are kept temporarily for a long time may be frustrated and may leave the organization.

4.2.6 Job Enrichment

Job enrichment involves more challenging tasks and responsibilities. For instance, an executive who is involved in preparing and presenting reports of performance may also be asked to fashion out plans.

4.2.7 Workers Participation

Inviting the employee to be a member of quality circle, or a committee or some other form of employee participation can also motivate the work-force.

4.2.8 Cordial Relations

Good and healthy relations must exist throughout the organization. This would definitely motivate the employees.

4.2.9 Other Factors

There are several other factors for motivating the employees:

Providing training to the employees.

Proper job placements.

Proper promotions and transfers.

Proper performance feedback.

Proper welfare facilities.

Flexible working hours.

5. Money as a Motivator

It is normally believed that money acts as a motivator. In general the role of money as a motivator depends upon certain factors:

- Money fails to motivate people, when there is no direct relationship between reward and effort.
- Economic conditions of people influence the importance of money. For poor person, the value of certain amount of money is quite high as compared to the rich.
- Money is a significant motivator for lower cadre of employees. However, money may not be a significant factor for senior executives who have already fulfilled their lower level needs.
- Employees are concerned not only with the amount of money paid to them, but it should be fair and equitable as paid to other employees on same level or status.
- Social attitudes towards money and wealth also influence the motivation or desire to earn more and more.
- Money as an extrinsic reward can serve as a means of making people to feel that they are valued and also a tangible form of recognition but this can rapidly diminish. According to Megalogenis (2002), it is easy to see that money is but one motivator amongst others. In fact, several recent surveys have shown that many professional employees do not

believe that money buys job satisfaction and many would now willingly swap future pay rises for greater job security, more control over their working hours and a better balance between work and family commitments.

6. Motivation and Employee Performance

The most important dependent variable in industrial and organizational psychology is job performance. One of the major concerns of manufacturing companies has focused on improving worker productivity, which is one of the job performance measures (Borman, 2004). According to Keller (2006), when you expect the best from your employees they will give you their best. On the other hand, when you expect little from employees they will give you low performance in return. Many people feel that they are not recognised or appreciated by their employers for their hard work and in turn they feel demotivated. Lack of communication and feedback from employers cause employees to feel overlooked and inhibits them from performing to the best of their ability. Employee motivation is one of the strategies managers employ to enhance effective job performance among workers in organisations.

For effective work performance to thrive in the organisation, motivation has to be managers' top priority. In this regard, leadership effectiveness relates to work performance. Leadership is a central feature of organisational performance. This is an essential part of managerial activities which focuses on efforts towards the goals and objectives of the organisation. There must be an appropriate form of behaviour to enhance performance. Leadership might be viewed in terms of the role of the leaders and their ability to achieve effective performance from others. Akinboye (2005) defines leadership as leaders inducing followers to act towards certain goals that represent the values and the motivations, the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers. Leadership is virtually important at all levels within the company. Leadership is the moral and intellectual ability to visualise and work for what is best for the company and its employees.

Good management and effective leadership help to develop team work and the integration of individual and group goals. Leaders have to sustain performance, sustaining and improving performance for the future is essential for the survival of the organisation. While keeping eyes on performance indicators, leaders encourage creativity and innovation, risk taking and skills for future development. Performance of all employees has to be maintained and morale rebuilt. The vital role of the leader in shaping performance and coaching becomes fundamental to the success of an organisation in all ramifications.

The quality of human resource management has a critical influence on the performance of the organisation. Concern for strategic integration, commitment, flexibility and quality has called attention to employees' motivation and retention. Financial motivation has become the most concern in today's organisation and tying it to Maslow's basic or physiological needs, non-financial aspect, only comes in when financial motivation has failed. According to Greenberg and Baron (2008), the definition of motivation could be divided into three main parts. The first part focuses on arousal that deals with the drive, or energy behind individual's action. People tend to be guided by their interest in making a good impression on others, doing interesting work and being successful in what they do. The second part refers to the choice people make and the direction their behaviour takes. The last part deals with maintaining behaviour, clearly defining how long people have to persist at attempting to meet their goals.

However, critics of the use of motivation technique in management have argued that what happens in organisations is that managers have to persuade (that is manipulate) their staff into believing that the organisation's needs and objectives are really identical to their own. They do this, by narrowing down and focusing on the psychologist's conceptions of motivation to fit the particular organisational situation (Thompson & McHugh, 2002).

The most successful and performing organisations bring out the best in their employees. Such organisations focus on the human resources within. Technology, economic considerations, and the product are secondary to the human qualities which allow people to work as team. For employees to function at maximum level, they must feel that they are essential to an organisation that challenges their human spirit, inspires their personal development, allows them to accomplish goals and tasks, and symbolises and represents only the highest standards of ethical conduct. Such considerations define a quality work environment. Successful organisations embody the following characteristics:

- Trust in relationships: Without trust, any human relationship will inevitably degenerate into conflict.
- Involvement: Decision making starts at the lowest level, where the facts are. What people help create, they support.
- Communication: People want to know as much as possible about their working environment. Lack of information hurts their pride, insults their intelligence, arouses their fears, and makes them counterproductive.
- Higher Expectations: Pride is the product of accomplishing challenging objectives.

7. Recommendations

Achieving an organisation's goal through excellent performance depends largely on the contribution made by employees. The human resource together with organisational and environmental factors drives the effectiveness, performance and profitability of the organisation. In this regard, the following steps are therefore recommended:

  i. Managers need an understanding of what motivates employees in order to use their aptitudes and abilities to enhance their performance. A basic knowledge of motivational and leadership theories would assist managers to fashion out policies that meet the needs of their employees.

 ii. Employers, managers and other leaders in the organisation are encouraged to show greater interest in the welfare of workers to make them more valuable and see themselves as contributors to the success of the organisation through effective leadership.

 iii. A good working condition and work environment should be provided within the workplace to make employees contribute their best towards the realisation of organisational objectives.

 iv. There should be timely and periodic on-the-job training to boost employees' performance.

  v. Managers should assess and evaluate employees at all levels through objective assessment techniques before and after recruitment and training exercises.

 vi. Seminars and workshops should be organised for managers and workers on the importance of good leadership and effect of motivation on employees' performance.

 vii. Managers should ensure that the workforce work not only harmoniously but as a team that has a common stake or interest. Cooperative attitude key in building and driving cohesion.

viii. Within the organisation they are people with diverse interests and background. People come to the workplace with different orientations and personality differs. The managers owe it a duty to manage this network of relationship to ensure that flawless and good interpersonal relationship exist within the organisation. They should be free flow of information accompanied with necessary feedback to balance communication mechanism.

 ix. Conflict is inevitable in every human organisation but effort should be made to reduce it to the barest minimum. Discipline is necessary to regulate the conduct of the employees. Less conflict-prone environment and high level of discipline are performance inducing factors which managers must strive to attain.

  x. The managers owe it as a responsibility to guide, build and nurture subordinates to develop skills and competencies to lead others. With good exemplary character, subordinates could see their superiors or bosses as model to be celebrated and emulated. Consequently, managers are presented or seen as custodian of acceptable behaviour.

 xi. The work environment is dynamic and change is never unexpected, the manager must be responsive to change and continuously fashion out appropriate strategies. The human element in the organisation must be carried along to make the change process not only effective but hitch-free and result-oriented.

 xii. The attainment of result or good performance rests heavily on the resource at the disposal of the work group. The manager should be prudent with respect to resource allocation to forestall waste which is inimical to the progress of the organisation. Judicious and wise use of resources is bound to elicit juicy performance for the benefit of all parties in the organisation.

xiii. Managers get things done through people. Trust and confidence in subordinates is the foundation for delegating authority. Managers should delegate and empower employees by giving them free hand to work effectively. The employees should be made to take responsibility for the work they do, provide them with the necessary tools and information needed to do the work not only effectively but efficiently. In a nutshell, managers should allow subordinates freedom and autonomy in their work.

xiv. Customers/Clients are most important in the business and require special attention or focus. Managers should ensure that good hands are recruited, trained and empowered to serve the customer well. Employees who achieve their targets should be rewarded and the ones that go extra mile to impress or satisfy the customers should be celebrated.

 xv. Managers should ensure quality consciousness in all work processes. There should be use of checklists at ensuring that every thing is in place before embarking on work process to prevent error(s). For instance, one of the reasons it is safer to travel by aeroplane than other forms of transportation is that pilots, no matter how experienced they are, religiously go through their pre-take off checklists before they start flying. It is the most basic form of discipline any company that is serious about safety and quality can use (Denman & Pennington, 2000).

xvi. Managers should strive to capture the best operating practice (BOP) and realise that within the industry there is a "best practitioner" or "performer". BOP shows the best way of operating a particular task, remove waste, ensure quality, provide safety and encourage continuous improvement.

xvii. The organisation should strive to install good pay base that is enticing and competitive and also ensure payment for increased skills or responsibilities. It should also create room for profit sharing through bonus or shares. Pay performance bonus based on employees' performance. Give recognition and handshake for a job well done. Be sensitive to the needs, feelings and plight of the employees and continuously stress a feeling of pride in their work and performance amongst others.

8. Conclusion

In an organisation, it may be practically impossible to work out a perfect solution that will promote job satisfaction and enhance performance at all times. In order to elicit better performance, motivational factors must be accorded high priority and employed properly as an essential ingredient for organisational progress and survival especially in the current day turbulent operating environment. Such factors include adequate remuneration, improved training, effective and free flow of communication, elevation of workers, conducive and healthy working environment amongst others.

Forster (2005) seems to have buttressed the foregoing viewpoint when he states that regardless of the complexities surrounding motivation, it is evident that high levels of motivation are desirable from the point of view of leaders and managers within organisations and individual employees. It is also important that organisations spend time and effort trying to increase the motivation, performance and productivity of their staff in the current climate of fierce competition and rapid perpetual change in most organisations. Furthermore, when motivation levels are high in organisations it is not unusual to find cultures where people do their best, enjoy their jobs and perform well at work. Where motivation levels are low in organisations, we invariably find dysfunctional cultures and employees who are indecisive, unhappy and underperforming (Forster, 2005). There lies the problem(s) motivation is meant to solve in the workplace.

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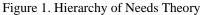
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Figure 1. Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Source: Maslow, A. (1943). "A Theory of Motivation". Psychological Review, 54.

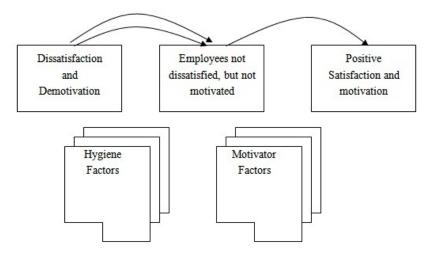Figure 2. Two-factor Theory

Source: Herzberg, F. (1966) Work and Nature of Man, Claveland, OH, World Publishing Co.

BEHAVIOURS ON THE JOB ARE DETERMINED BY:
- Needs the individual brings to the Job(Unique to each person)
- The Situation outside the person
- Opportunities for satisfying needs
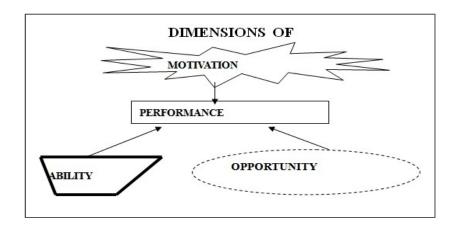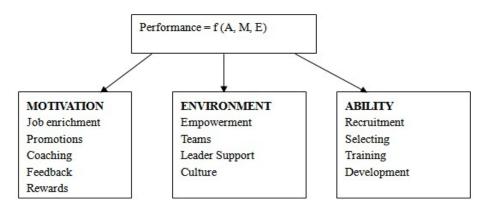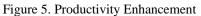
Figure 3

Source: Anyim, Chidi & Badejo, 2011

Figure 4. Dimensions of Performance

Source: Anyim, Chidi & Badejo, 2011

Figure 5. Productivity Enhancement

Source: Battu, N. R. (2008). Human Resource Development. New Delhi: APH

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