

Contemporary Issues in Employee Motivation and Performance in Organizations

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Abstract

The contemporary organization is encumbered with the challenge of properly/adequately motivating employees to perform. This issue has hindered employees from performing optimally. The lack of proper welfare scheme and motivation has adversely affected the performance of the employees. Lawler, Porter and Vroom (2009) suggest that performance is a function of ability and motivation as depicted in the formula of $\text{Performance} = f(\text{Ability} \times \text{Motivation})$. Employees have the ability to do their tasks but the expected motivation that would give the push is not readily available. The objective of this study is therefore to assist contemporary organizations to see the need for proper motivation and apply/implement it in their organizations to improve performance of the employees. This study adopted the theoretical analysis method. It was found out that in the workplace, there is no proper implementation of welfare packages and other necessary benefits to boost the morale of employees to perform. It was also found that lateness to work, indiscipline and truancy of workers are as a result of dissatisfaction of employees with their welfare scheme. The study therefore, recommends that management of organizations should improve on the provision of employees welfare scheme (non-financial and financial benefits). Management should also provide regular training for employees to be relevant in their jobs.

Keywords:

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Background to the Study

The contemporary organizations are pressured with the serious challenges of motivating employees in order to perform optimally. This is as a result of the dynamic nature of the workplace and the diversity of the workforce. Organizations desire to be successful in this contemporary highly competitive business environment. Organizations irrespective of size and market are expected to strive to retain their best employees, acknowledging their important roles and influences on the organizations effectiveness. In order to successfully deal with the challenges of motivating the employees, management should create a strong and positive relationship with the employees, and direct them towards tasks fulfillment. In order to achieve organizational goals and objectives, managements develop strategies to compete favourably in the highly competitive business environment and to increase their performance. Nevertheless, just a few workplaces consider the human capital as being an important asset, capable of leading them to success or decline. If employees are not satisfied with their jobs and not motivated to fulfill their tasks and achieve their goals, organizations would not attain success.

Through proper employees welfare, organization's performance level can be influenced immensely. According to Coetsee (2002), Robbins, Judge, Odendael and Roodt (2009), motivation in the workplace can mean the willingness to exert high levels of effort by individuals and teams to reach organizations goals in conjunction with the satisfaction of the individual needs of the participants. Benson (2008) opines that performance relates to the effort of an employee that is measurable against the employee's effectiveness and efficiency in the achievement of the set goals or tasks. Motivation in the workplace creates the willingness of individual or teams to achieve goals and tasks through effectiveness and efficiency. In today's dynamic business environment, management is encouraged to effectively implement employees' welfare benefits and other incentives in order to boost their morale to perform.

In the report of the Asian Regional Conference of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the term "Employees Welfare is understood to include such service facilities and amenities which may be established in or in the incite of undertakings to enable the persons employed to perform their own tasks in healthy congenial surroundings and provide them amenities conducive to good health and high morale". Welfare facilities are in addition to regular wages and other economic benefits available to employees due to legal provisions and collective bargaining. The aim of employee welfare is to bring about the development of the whole personality of the employee to make a better and formidable workforce. The social and economic aspects of the life of a worker have a direct influence on the social and economic development of the nation. There is every need to take extra care of the employees by providing both statutory and non-statutory facilities to them.

The welfare activities may also be categorized as intra-mural and extra-mural facilities. Intra-mural activities consist of facilities provided within the organization and include medical facilities, compensation for accidents, provision of canteens, supply of drinking water, provision of safety measures, activities relating to improving conditions of employment etc. whereas extra-mural activities cover the services and facilities provided outside the

organizations such as housing facilities, recreational facilities, and educational benefits for employees and their children and by practicing these welfare activities in the organizations, the quality of work life of the employees can be increased and at the same time the satisfaction level towards the management also increased.

Conceptual Review

Concepts of Motivation

Huczynski and Buchanan (2007) opine that motivation is a combination of goals towards which human behaviour is directed, the process through which those goals are pursued and achieved and the social factors involved. Latham and Ernst (2006) say motivation was in the beginning of the 1900s thought only to be monetary. However, it was discovered during the 20th century that to motivate employees, there are more factors than just money. In their views, employees' satisfaction with their job is an important indicator for good job performance and happy employees are productive. Motivation to them is a psychological factor and is affected by the workers mental attitude and health. Therefore, in order to be motivated, a person needs to have certain basic needs fulfilled. If these needs are lacking, a person's self-esteem and self-actualization cannot develop. This could result in lack of interest to progress and develop, both professionally and personally. Dubin (2002) sees motivation as the complex of forces starting and keeping a person at work in an organization. Motivation is something that puts the person to action, and continues in the course of action already initiated.

Motivation refers to the way a person is enthused at work to intensify his/her desire and willingness to use his/her energy for achievement of organizations' objectives. Luthans (1992) maintain that motivation is a combination of needs, drives and incentives. He went further to say that motivation is the process that starts with physiological or psychological deficiency or need that activates behaviour or drive that is aimed at a goal or incentive. Mullins (1999) asserts that the underlying concept of motivation is some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goal in order to fulfill some need or expectations. Mullins in the same vein also distinguishes between extrinsic motivation related to psychological rewards such as the sense of challenge and achievement.

In this age and time where countries are striving to be on top of the others - technologically, politically, economically and otherwise, the problem of welfare and motivation cannot be over emphasized and should not be trampled under the rugs, as it is an essential ingredient of labour force. Organizations use four basic kinds of inputs or resources from the environment such as human, finance, materials and information resources. Management is responsible for cobbling and coordinating resources to achieve the organizational functions - planning, organizing, leading, decision making, and controlling. There is a range of motivational techniques that can be used to improve productivity, reduce workforce stress and increase self-confidence. Some managers believe that they can achieve result from teams by using coercive methods.

Issues inherent in Employee Motivation

It is not an exaggeration to say that contemporary organizations are burdened with the challenge of providing proper welfare packages and motivation (incentives) for their employees. Most organizations tend to push the issue of welfare and motivation aside, which in turn leads to poor performance and low productivity. A happy worker is a productive worker. Most employees are discouraged as a result of poor welfare and motivation. This study will attempt to examine the inherent impact of staff welfare and motivation on the performance of employees in organizations. It is on this ground that the paper aims to review literature on contemporary issues in employee motivation and performance in organizations. The specific objectives of the paper were to have a robust discourse on employees' welfare packages and motivational tools provided in the workplace. Secondly, to examine the level of employees and management relationship on staff welfare and motivation in the workplace.

Employees Expectations

Organizations are not merely established and designed to make profit only. The employees have to be satisfied with situations that will assure them of their future. They look forward to situations that will promote their ego and stabilize their financial standing in the society. The satisfaction that workers derive from their jobs can affect their motivation to work. People are motivated by various factors at different times. According to Wilkinson, Waterman, and Simmons (2007), the first factor is the combination of the individual perceptions of the expectations other people have of them, and their own expectations of themselves. This happens because people come into work situations with various expectations. This is why a balance must be struck as much as possible between organizational objectives and individual aspirations (Sulcas 2007). The essence of the view above is to ensure a situation where the individual is motivated while the organization is achieving established objectives. These factors have to be positively motivated in the workers to yield proactive behaviour. This can be achieved through a carefully planned reward system, which is a type of reinforcement directed at modifying people's behaviour. Adonisi (2005) opines that positive reinforcement boosts favorable consequences that go a long way to encourage the repetition of particular behaviour.

Types of Motivation

According to Mullins (2005), organizational success is dependent upon members being motivated to use their full talents, abilities, and direction to perform well in the right areas. The various needs and expectations in the workplace can be categorized in two ways namely extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Mullins in the same vein, says a worker is being motivated by obtaining the highest possible wages through working in the most efficient and productive way. According to Kets de Vries (2001) quoted by Mullins, the best performing companies possess a set of values that create the right conditions for high performance. It is, therefore, important to put emphasis on the need for widening choice that enables one to choose more freely instead of being directed by forces of which they are unaware and stated that it is a motivational needs system on which such choice is based. Extrinsic motivation is related to tangible rewards such as salary and fringe benefits, security, promotion, contract of service,

the environment and conditions of service. These are what need to be done to or for people to motivate them.. they are often determined at the organizational level and may be largely outside the control of the individual managers. Extrinsic motivators can have an immediate and powerful effect but will not necessarily last long (Mullins 2005; Armstrong 2006).

Intrinsic motivation is related to psychological rewards such as the opportunity to use one's ability, a sense of challenge and achievement, receiving appreciation, positive recognition, and being treated in a caring and considerate manner. Mullins (2005) opines that psychological rewards are those that can usually be determined by the actions and behaviour of the individual managers. Armstrong (2006) states that intrinsic motivators are concerned with the quality of work life; they are inherent in individuals and not imposed from outside.

Classifications of Motivation

The complex and variable nature of needs and expectations give rise to the following simplistic but useful broad three-fold classification of motivation to work namely: (a) Economic reward - this is an instrumental orientation to work and includes items such as pay, fringe benefits, pension right, security etc. (b) Intrinsic satisfaction - this is a personal orientation to work and concern with oneself. It is dependent on the individual attitude and varies from person and circumstances. It also varies from jobs and different part within the same job. It is derived from nature of the job itself, interest in the job, and personal growth and development. (c) Social relationship - this is the relative orientation to work and familiarize with other people. It is an important feature in all setups. It improves the supportive working relationships and teamwork and comprises friendships, group working and the desire for affiliation, status and dependency.

Employees Welfare Services and Facilities

This concept has been used by many organizations as a strategy for improving productivity. Priti (2009) notes that the role of welfare activities is to promote economic development by increasing efficiency and productivity with the underlying principle being used in making workers give their loyal services grudgingly in genuine spirit of co-operation and general wellbeing of employees. The term employees welfare refers to the facilities provided to employees inside and outside the organization premises such as canteens, rest rooms and recreation facilities, transportation, housing and all other services that contribute to the well being of employees and performance of workers. Priti (2009) states that Quality of Work Life (QWL), epitomized in staff welfare, is the degree to which the employees are able to satisfy important personal need through their experiences in the organization. Aswathappa (2004) says, it involves physical, mental, moral and emotional well being of the employees.

Mwiti (2007) reveals that naturally welfare services may not directly relate to an employees' jobs but the presence or absence of the services is notable through employees' performance, attitude, high or low labour turnover. Manzini and Gwandure (2011) argued that, welfare services can be used to secure the labour force by providing proper human conditions of work and living through minimizing the hazardous effect on the life of the workers and their family members. Mishra and Manju (2007) added that welfare services may be provided for matters

concerning employees in terms of supplementing the income of the workers by providing services such as housing, medical assistance, canteens, and recreation facilities.

Furthermore, welfare facilities help in raising employees' standards of living. This prompts workers to pay more attention towards work and thus increases their productivity and foster better industrial relations, help organizations visibility and popularity (Priti 2009). Employees welfare facilities enable workers to live a richer and more satisfactory life. After employees have been hired, trained and remunerated they need to be retained and maintained to serve the organization better. Harika (2010) states that the success of these employees welfare activities depend on the approach which has been taken into account in providing such activities to employees; and welfare policy should be guided by idealistic morale and human value and such services include the provision of medical facilities, sanitary and the accommodation of workers employed, amenities and industrial social security measures, training and education facilities, HIV and AIDS risk reduction and counseling services. Employees welfare therefore, is a comprehensive term which refers to the various services, benefits and facilities offered by employers to employees with a purpose of enriching the life of employees and to keep them happy and contented (Mishra and Manju 2007).

Motivation and employees welfare is an absolute essential in the attainment of organizational goals. Motivation is a major tool in management, since the success or failure of management depends predominantly upon how well employees perform. The needed skills and knowledge are additive to the achievement of the adequate understanding of human motivation, and staff welfare would improve managers competence both in bringing up employees' potentials and achieving effective and efficient performance from others.

Organization's Welfare Scheme and Employees Performance

Management determines the success or failure of every project to a large extent, they define the goals, plan, organize, direct, coordinate and monitor project activities. They also meet project goals and objectives by using interpersonal and organizational skills such as communication, delegation, decision-making and negotiation (Basson, Garruthers, Kruger, Du Plessis, Visser, Steyn, Prozesky-Kuschke, Van Eck, 2003).

Stevenson (2002) notes that compensation is a significant issue for the design of work systems and that it is important for organizations to develop suitable compensation plans for their employees in order to attract and hold competent employees. Employees welfare is a comprehensive term which refers to the various services, benefits and facilities offered by the employers to the employees with a purpose of enriching the lives of employees and to keep them happy and contented in that organization. On the other hand, performance of employees in any organization is vital not only for the growth of the organization but also for the growth of the individual employees. An organization must know who are its outstanding workers, those who need additional training and those not contributing to the efficiency and welfare of the organization. The main essence of performance is to evaluate and provide accurate measure on how well a person is performing the tasks assigned to him. A very careful evaluation of employees' performance can uncover weaknesses or lacking. Once identified, these deficiencies may be remedy through additional training or the provision of the needed rewards.

Employee Welfare Scheme and Motivation as it Affects Employees' Performance

The extent to which employees are motivated in their work depends on how well those employees are able to produce in their jobs. Motivation is expected to have a positive effect on quality performance; employees who are characterized by a high level of motivation show a higher work and life satisfaction. Having a high level of motivation is therefore in itself valuable for employees and a decrease in motivation might affect employees' performance. Welfare and motivation lead to high level of initiative and creativity from the employee and where monitoring is difficult, motivation is therefore extremely important for ensuring high quality performance. Quality of employee performance could be measured by three individual measures of employees' performance.

The first measure of the individual performance items is a self-rating measure of employees' performance through a program called success achievement program (SAP). The performance of the employees asks to indicate eight-point scale on how well the employees are doing their jobs. The second measure of the performance is the extent to which the workers are willing to conduct tasks that are not part of their jobs description. The employees are asked to report on the SAP about their willingness to perform additional tasks that are not expected from them regularly and to think constructively about how the organization they work for could be improved upon.

Inadequate Employee Welfare Scheme and Motivation as it affects Employee performance

In every organization as earlier stated, it is individuals who bring their own perspectives, values and attributes to organizational life, and when managed effectively, can bring considerable benefits to organizations (Mullins 1999). However, when managed poorly, they have the potential to severely limit organizational growth and threatens the viability of the business, either private or public sector. If no proper welfare scheme or motivational tools are put in place, the organization will experience - constructive behaviour and frustration - these are the two possible outcomes. Constructive behaviour is a positive reaction to the blockage of a desired goal and can take two main forms (problem solving or restructuring). Problem solving is the removal of barriers e.g. repairing a damaged machine, or by passing an uncooperative superior. Restructuring is the substitution of an alternative goal, although such a goal may be of lower order e.g. getting additional part-time job because of failure to be promoted to a higher position. Frustration is the negative response to a blockage of a desired goal and results in a defensive form of behaviour. Frustration has many possible reactions and these can be summarized under the following headings - aggression; regression; fixation; and withdrawal. These forms of reactions are not mutually exclusive as frustration induced behaviour on the job is a combination of aggression, regression and fixation.

Aggression is an attack on some person(s) physically or verbally. It may be directed against the person(s) or object(s) which is perceived as the source of frustration and the actual blockage e.g. striking a supervisor, destruction of equipment or document etc. a displaced aggression sets in when the direct attack is not made because the source of frustration is not clear or specific; the source is feared such as powerful superior. The frustrated person finds an

easier, safer person to direct the aggression towards and some of the reactions usually experienced are picking arguments with colleagues, being short tempered and shouting at subordinates etc. Regression is reverting to childish or more primitive form of behaviour like sulking, crying, tantrums etc. Fixation is a persisting form of behaviour which has no adapting value, therefore, actions are continued repeatedly amounting to no positive result. The inability to accept change or new ideas, repeatedly trying equipment which will clearly not work and insisting on application for promotion even though not qualified are examples of fixation. Withdrawal is apathy, giving up or resigning. Arriving at work late and leaving earlier, sickness and absenteeism, refusal to accept responsibility, avoiding decision making, passing work over to colleagues or leaving the job undone (Mullins 2005).

Conclusion

There is no doubt that adequate provision of staff welfare and motivation would attract a high level of productivity of employees' in the workplace. The management should realize this and do everything within its power to actualize its vision of making the workforce to be most effective and efficient. The aims and objectives of the organization as established are to ensure uninterrupted flow of work in order to achieve set goals can only be possible when the workers are properly encouraged through incentives and motivation. Like it is rightly said, a happy worker is also a dedicated worker. Employees' that are well taken care of by way of staff welfare and motivation would be dedicated workers. They would put in their best, time, energy in discharging their duties thereby bringing about efficiency, effectiveness and high productivity. Therefore, employee welfare and motivation cannot be neglected because of the power and driving force that is behind it. In other words, employees' welfare and motivation would enhance a continuous growth and development in the workplace if only adopted and properly monitored.

Recommendations

The paper recommends that:

1. Employees welfare and motivation should not be neglected by management so that the employees would perform productively.
2. Management should improve on both financial and non financial benefits to employees such as a living wages, promoting staff when due and on merit to enhance and enrich their jobs, recognizing excellence by verbal and written commendations.
3. Management should put employees into affectionate consideration as the organization cannot succeed on its own without willing and competent staff to carry out the needed tasks.
4. Management should provide and maintain regular training schedules that give opportunities to employees to boost their performance.
5. Management is encouraged to be sensitive to the plights of the employees.
6. Employees on their own part are to develop personal interest, commitment, and dedication to their jobs so as to enable them to achieve the optimum performance.

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