
The Impact of Employee Motivation on the Performance of Organisations

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Abstract:

Purpose: The main objective of the research conducted was to identify the motivators influencing the work of employees and to assess the impact of the level of employee motivation on the results obtained by organisations based in Poland.

Design/Methodology/Approach: Employees of organisations based in Poland were selected to carry out the research process. The research was conducted based on the survey method, while the research tool was survey questionnaires, constructed from closed questions. The surveys were conducted anonymously. The survey was made available through Google Forms. In addition, a pilot face-to-face interview was conducted among the selected survey participants, which allowed the pre-prepared survey to be detailed. The adoption of these research techniques allowed the collection of statistical (quantitative, economic data) and qualitative (perceptions, value judgements, evaluations, opinions, awareness of facts) material.

Findings: The research confirmed that, in addition to financial motivators, high levels of employee motivation are also influenced by job stability, independence, the opportunity to be creative and a friendly atmosphere in the workplace. The research also confirmed that highly motivated employees show higher work efficiency and care more about the quality of their products or services, which positively strengthens the organisation's credibility and position as a stable employer.

Practical Implications: The article sheds light on the relationship between the level of employee motivation and its impact on organisational performance.

Originality/Value: The article presents the results of a study on the evaluation of the impact of the level of motivation on the results achieved by organisations in Poland.

Keywords: Management, human resource management, employee motivation, organisational outcomes.

JEL codes: M12, M50, M54.

Paper type: Research article.

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1. Introduction

The statement that people are the most important asset has been present in management since the 1970s (Sienkiewicz, 2018). The emergence of the stand-alone HR function of the enterprise (turn of the 20th century), which was focused on matching employed employees to existing organisational structures, predates publications recognising the importance of human resources in the production of goods and services.

For example, R. Owen already pointed out the importance of human resources and material and financial resources in production in the first half of the 19th century (Aldag and Stearns, 1987). During this period, the threat of losing one's job was considered the primary mechanism for motivating people to work (Pocztowski, 2007). The current state of the personnel function in Polish enterprises is a resultant of several factors.

The first is the burden of the past, which was characterised in the area of personnel management by such features as the lack of a systemic approach, the attractiveness of the activities undertaken, the influence of political factors and the high centralisation of the function (Listwan, 1993), where the effect was a low rank of the personnel function and a lack of professionalism in this area of business management.

The second factor is the changes in the environment of Polish organisations. An element of these changes is the emergence of a market for personnel consultancy services. The third important factor is the state of knowledge about the nature and conditions of the performance of the personnel function (Pocztowski, 2007; Aldag and Stearns, 1987; Thalassinou *et al.*, 2019).

Today, motivating employees is an important part of human resource management. Motivation is found, among others, in the definition of H. King and A. Ludwiczynski, according to which human resource management is a set of interconnected activities that include hiring, developing and motivating people in organisations, as well as shaping appropriate relationships between managers and employees (Armstrong, 1998). Today, institutions must use the power of technology and human capital to survive in a competitive environment (Uygur *et al.*, 2021).

Motivation in relation to management is a complex process, the essence of which is to encourage an employee to perform his or her duties in such a way that they satisfy his or her supervisor and also bring tangible benefits to the organisation.

Given the above, the main objective of this article is to identify and assess the effects achieved by organisations based in Poland as a result of motivating employees.

2. Literature Review

Behind the success of any enterprise are its employees. Without human capital, no organisation could successfully operate in the market. One of the key elements of human resources management is motivating employees to work. It has an impact not only on the results achieved by the enterprise, but also on the job satisfaction of the employees and their self-esteem.

The mark of a good manager is the ability to adapt motivation tools to the individual employee, but above all to know them. It is also useful to know the theoretical foundations of the psychology of motivation and the most important theories related to motivation (Norena-Chavez and Thalassinos, 2022).

This is because the motivation system is the factor that binds employees to the organisation through the benefits it brings to both parties. An employer who motivates effectively enjoys good results from his activities, while employees, thanks to their conscientious work, benefit from various types of privileges.

In order to achieve effective results in motivating employees, it is necessary to use a number of motivational factors that guarantee a high level of motivation and adapt the motivational system to the individual characteristics, aspirations and needs of subordinates.

Motivation can be considered as a force that directs, energizes, and sustains behaviour (Van Iddekinge *et al.*, 2018), or the willingness and desire of employees to perform a task (Bos-Nehles *et al.*, 2013). Motivation is an ambiguous term, i.e., it can be understood and aroused in different ways. It can be stated that it is a psychological mechanism that organises a person and directs him or her towards the achievement of a set goal (Penc, 1996).

Motivation is the result of some process in which we perceive some deficiency or total lack between the actual and the expected state. Once this discrepancy is perceived, the identification of resources and opportunities occurs, the analysis of which leads to the setting of an action plan and its implementation (Nieckarz, 2011).

Motivation, as opposed to manipulation, is distinguished by the fact that it is not an unethical behaviour, influencing a person, not necessarily for his or her benefit, but a behaviour that sets the goal and direction of an action, as well as its implementation (Wozniak, 2012).

Motives, on the other hand, are the factors that stimulate the organism to act. They can be divided into, primary (primary) - they are innate, i.e., they have a physiological basis; general - they are something intermediate between primary and secondary; examples here are, curiosity, interaction with others or emotional attachment; secondary (higher-order) - they are the product of learning, so they can

include motives of power, achievement, belonging, security and status (Kopertyńska, 2008).

The incentives offered to employees should be properly composed. It is connected with the participation and the role of remuneration among benefits offered by an employer. According to specialists, remuneration should not be the only motivation for taking up employment (Bilińska-Reformat and Stańczyk, 2018).

When talking about motivation, it is also important to mention the concept of job satisfaction. Being in a work environment is therefore linked to various factors that contribute to an employee's sense of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. In turn, it is employees who derive satisfaction from their working life that constitute the strength of an organisation, which can function effectively thanks to them.

Taking care of employee satisfaction is particularly important due to the fact that subordinates who are dissatisfied with their work, through various types of counter-productive actions, pose a potential threat to the development of the company (Grabiec and Jędraszczyk-Kałwak, 2018).

According to E.A. Locke, job satisfaction is the result of comparing an employee's expectations with what the employee receives in return (Locke, 1976), which in turn manifests itself in positive or negative attitudes towards the job itself, the organisation in which the employee is employed and towards colleagues (Bortnowska and Stankiewicz, 2005).

It should be noted that employee appraisal is also an element of stimulating subordinate behaviour in the process of managing and motivating people, and its results form the basis for determining the development potential of individual employees and their training needs (Noja *et al.*, 2021).

It should also be noted that the effect of appraisal may be the decision to dismiss employees (Suchodolski, 2010). Katou and Budhwar (Katou and Budhwar, 2010) and Choi (Choi, 2014) consider performance appraisal practices as ability-enhancing while other authors consider performance appraisal practices (e.g. De Reuver *et al.*, 2019, Ma *et al.*, 2017, Yu *et al.*, 2020) as motivation-enhancing (Bos-Nehles, *et al.*, 2023).

3. Methods and Materials

The organisation of the research involved five action steps:

- 1 is survey programming - defining the purpose, scope, sources of information, type of statistical material, preparation of research techniques and tools,
- 2 is observation - conducting the survey,
- 3 is the control, ordering, grouping and processing of the collected information,

- 4 is the analysis of the developed material,
- 5 is the inference based on the analysis of the collected information.

The aim of the research was to identify motivators and assess their impact on motivation among employees of organisations based in Poland. Another aim of the research was for employees to assess how their level of motivation influences the results achieved by the organisations.

Specific objectives of the study included:

1. identifying the motivators that influence work motivation.
2. evaluation of the impact of motivators on employee motivation.
3. identification of the types of outcomes achieved by organisations.
4. Employees' assessment of the impact of their level of motivation on organisational performance outcomes.

The analyses conducted for the assignment allowed the following research problems to be formulated:

1. what motivators influence work motivation in the surveyed employees of the organisations?
2. what types of effects occur in organisations as a result of motivating employees?
3. how do employees assess the impact of the level of motivation on the effects achieved by organisations?

The following research hypotheses were set in the study:

H1: In addition to financial motivators, high levels of employee motivation are influenced by job stability.

H2: Independence, the opportunity to show creativity and a friendly atmosphere in the workplace influence higher levels of employee motivation.

H3: Highly motivated employees show higher work efficiency and care more about the quality of their products or services, which has a positive impact on strengthening the organisation's credibility and position as a stable employer.

The research was conducted using a survey method. The survey was made available via Google Forms to employees of organisations based in Poland. In addition, a pilot face-to-face interview was conducted among selected participants of the study, which allowed the pre-prepared questionnaire to be detailed. The adoption of these research techniques allowed for the collection of statistical (quantitative, economic data) and qualitative (perceptions, value judgements, evaluations, opinions, awareness of facts) material.

The research was conducted in June 2024. The study used a survey questionnaire constructed mostly of closed questions. 140 complete questionnaires were received and accepted for the present analysis.

A total of 140 people (N=140) took part in the survey, including 101 (72.1%) women and 49 (27.9%) men. In terms of respondents' educational background, most had a university degree, 53.6%, followed by secondary education 43.6%, vocational education 2.1% and primary education 0.7%. Another criterion taken into account was the position occupied.

Most respondents hold a specialist position of 35%, followed by director/manager 20.7%, office worker 18.6%, production/physical worker 15%, teacher 7.2%, sales assistant 2.1% and nurse/hygienist 1.4%. Looking at the age of respondents, the structure is as follows: 18 - 30 years - 22.1%; 31 - 40 years - 29.3%; 41 - 50 years - 40.7%; 51 - more years - 7.9%.

Another criterion is the size of the organisation in which the respondents work and here the most numerous group were organisations with 50 to 249 employees (32.1% of respondents, where n=140, followed by 31.4% over 250 employees, 26.4% from 10 to 49 employees and 10% to 9 employees.

Analysing the sector of the economy in which the respondents are employed, the service sector has the largest share at 46.4%, followed by the sector including research, social welfare, justice, military, police, public administration, leisure and tourism and health - here the percentage share is 26.4%. The next sector is the industrial sector 18.6%, the sector covering advanced services i.e. marketing, advertising, IT, banking, consulting, financial services and insurance 7.9%. Lastly is the agricultural industry 0.7%.

4. Research Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the assessment of the impact of motivators on the level of motivation in employees. This assessment is a subjective feeling of the employees. For the purposes of the study, the following motivators were identified:

- amount of remuneration
- bonuses
- praise
- atmosphere
- penalties
- Relationship with superiors
- opportunity for promotion
- opportunity for professional development/training
- job stability

- job satisfaction
- opportunity to be creative
- independence/less constant control by superiors
- prestige of the organisation
- additional benefits.

Table 1. Assessment of the impact of motivators on employee motivation levels (1 - very weakly influences; 2 - weakly influences; 3 - does not influence; 4 - moderately influences; 5 - very influences)

Assessing the impact of motivators on employee motivation levels	Assessment	Number N=140	Share%
Level of remuneration	1	7	5,0
	2	10	7,1
	3	8	5,7
	4	29	20,7
	5	86	61,5
Bonuses	1	11	7,9
	2	6	4,2
	3	7	5,0
	4	28	20,0
	5	88	62,9
Praise	1	7	5,0
	2	7	5,0
	3	13	9,3
	4	40	28,6
	5	73	52,1
Atmosphere	1	8	5,7
	2	6	4,3
	3	8	5,7
	4	30	21,4
	5	88	62,9
Penalties	1	38	27,1
	2	26	18,6
	3	32	22,9
	4	27	19,3
	5	17	12,1
Relationship with the superior	1	11	7,9
	2	10	7,1
	3	11	7,9
	4	45	32,1
	5	63	45,0
Opportunities for promotion	1	11	7,9
	2	9	6,4

	3	25	17,9
	4	42	30,0
	5	53	37,8
Opportunities for professional development/training	1	13	9,3
	2	8	5,7
	3	19	13,6
	4	44	31,4
	5	56	40,0
Job stability	1	11	7,9
	2	2	1,4
	3	12	8,6
	4	29	20,7
	5	86	61,4
Job satisfaction	1	11	7,9
	2	8	5,7
	3	8	5,7
	4	32	22,9
	5	81	57,8
Opportunities to be creative	1	10	7,1
	2	8	5,7
	3	20	14,3
	4	46	32,9
	5	56	40,0
Independence/no constant control by a superior	1	7	5,0
	2	11	7,9
	3	18	12,9
	4	38	27,1
	5	66	47,1
Prestige of the organisation	1	16	11,4
	2	13	9,4
	3	38	27,1
	4	35	25,0
	5	38	27,1
Additional benefits	1	14	10,0
	2	13	9,3
	3	24	17,1
	4	35	25,0
	5	54	38,6

Source: Own study.

The first research hypothesis (H1) is that, in addition to financial motivators, high levels of employee motivation are also influenced by job stability. This hypothesis was confirmed.

The second hypothesis (H2) assumes that independence, the opportunity to show creativity and a friendly atmosphere in the workplace influence higher levels of employee motivation. This hypothesis was confirmed.

More than 82% of respondents stated that the amount of remuneration influences the high level of employees' motivation to work. The result is similar for bonuses received and their impact on the level of motivation of respondents (almost 83%). In the case of employment stability, also more than 82% assessed that it influences the level of motivation to a high degree.

The independence and lack of constant control by the supervisor (indicated by over 64% of respondents), as well as the opportunity to be creative (almost 73% of respondents) and the friendly atmosphere at work (over 84% of respondents) also influence the high level of motivation of employees.

Respondents also indicated that their level of work motivation is significantly influenced by praise (over 80%), relationship with their supervisor (over 77%), opportunity for promotion (almost 68%), opportunity for professional development and access to training (over 71%), job satisfaction (over 80%), additional benefits (over 63%) and prestige of the organisation (over 52%). Only penalties were considered by respondents as not having a higher level of employee motivation.

Table 2 presents an assessment of the impact of the level of motivation on organisational performance outcomes. For the purposes of the study, the following types of outcomes achieved by organisations were identified:

- product/service quality
- effectiveness of work
- financial effects of the organisation
- increase in the market value of the organisation
- increase in the organisation's prestige
- increase in management remuneration
- reduction in the organisation's management risk
- removal of ineffective management
- improved competitiveness of the organisation
- strengthening the organisation's credibility and position as a stable employer.

Table 2. Assessment of the impact of the level of employee motivation on the results achieved by the organisation (1 - does not influence; 2 - weakly influences; 3 - moderately influences; 4 - greatly influences; 5 - very influences)

Assessing the impact of employee motivation levels on the organisation's performance	Assessment	Number N=140	Share%
Product/service quality	1	10	7,1

	2	6	4,3
	3	30	21,4
	4	54	38,6
	5	40	28,6
Effectiveness of the work	1	5	3,6
	2	4	2,9
	3	30	21,4
	4	54	38,6
	5	47	33,5
Financial performance of the organisation	1	18	12,9
	2	14	10,0
	3	40	28,6
	4	38	27,1
	5	30	21,4
Increase in market value of the organisation	1	20	14,3
	2	19	13,6
	3	44	31,4
	4	30	21,4
	5	27	19,3
Increase in the organisation's prestige	1	15	10,7
	2	17	12,1
	3	37	26,5
	4	35	25,0
	5	36	25,7
Increase in management remuneration	1	31	22,1
	2	15	10,7
	3	46	32,9
	4	31	22,2
	5	17	12,1
Reduction of the organisation's management risk	1	24	17,1
	2	20	14,3
	3	51	36,4
	4	26	18,6
	5	19	13,6
Removal of ineffective management	1	35	25,0
	2	19	13,6
	3	46	32,9
	4	19	13,6
	5	21	15,0
Improving the organisation's competitiveness	1	25	17,9
	2	14	10,0
	3	40	28,6
	4	38	27,1
	5	23	16,4
Strengthening the credibility and position of the organisation as a stable employer	1	17	12,1
	2	17	12,1
	3	33	23,6

	4	36	25,7
	5	37	26,5

Source: Own study.

Hypothesis three (H3) assumes that highly motivated employees show higher work efficiency and care more about the quality of their products or services, which positively strengthens the organisation's credibility and position as a stable employer. This hypothesis was confirmed.

Respondents confirmed that their level of motivation influences their work efficiency, as well as the quality of the products or services provided. More than 70% of respondents admitted that a higher level of their motivation significantly and highly influences the effectiveness of their work.

As many as 67% admitted that the higher the level of motivation, the more they care about the quality of the product or service they provide. This can be seen to strengthen the organisation's credibility and position as a stable employer in the market (over 52% of respondents).

It should be noted that employees believe that a higher level of their motivation to work influences: higher financial effects of the organisation (48.5%), an increase in the market value of the organisation (40.7%), an increase in the prestige of the organisation (50.7%), an increase in the remuneration of the management (34.3%), an improvement in the competitiveness of the organisation (43.5%).

5. Conclusion

The primary impetus for people to become active is usually the desire to achieve a specific goal. However, this goal must have a specific motive, i.e. a reason why a person wants to achieve it. Although many people may pursue one goal, their motivations may be quite different. This depends on the individual's characteristics, desires, needs or capacity to act (Rheinberg, 2006).

Also, within an individual, there may be differences in motivation to act, determined, among other things, by changes in behaviour over time - for an employee may work with full, above-average commitment one day and put minimal effort into his or her work on another day.

The psychology of motivation focuses on needs and the feeling of deprivation when these are not satisfied, and therefore approaches motivation from the content side and, in the simplest terms, seeks to answer the question 'what motivates a person to work?'. A similar question should be asked by the manager, whose role it is to apply such measures so that the employee undertakes a certain activity at work.

In practice, the motivating factor for employees is primarily pay. In order for remuneration to motivate hard work and effective performance, it should be appropriate to the job, the degree of difficulty and the responsibilities of the job. Remuneration includes both the basic salary as well as any financial allowances that shape the total income from work, such as bonuses or financial rewards.

Certainly, bonuses and rewards have a greater impact on the employee than the basic salary itself. This is because they are perceived as a direct consequence of an effectively performed task or a distinction for above-average work (Jasiński, 2001).

Many companies already have bonus systems that clearly specify what employees are entitled to bonuses for and in what amount. As a result, employees target specific outcomes of their work when they want to be rewarded. In addition to bonuses, other material wage incentives include a basic salary increase, obligatory bonuses such as those for on-call duty, seniority, night work or overtime, and optional bonuses such as jubilee bonuses or performance bonuses.

Increasingly, however, it can be seen that an attractive basic salary is no longer sufficient, and the system of non-wage benefits is also gaining in importance. Consequently, the decision to work for a given company is often made on the basis of the allowances offered by the employer (Dołżyńska, 2015).

Nowadays, employers attach increasing importance to intangible motivation tools. Work is not only intended to provide a financial livelihood, but also the development and satisfaction of the employee himself. Employers have a full range of tools at their disposal to motivate employees to perform their duties effectively. Nevertheless, a manager should tailor motivational factors to the individual characteristics of a given employee, his or her competences and development needs (Aniszewska, 2007).

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