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DEFINING WORK MOTIVATION: FOCUSING ON THE SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY

Effective control of an economical phenomenon requires an understanding of the phenomenon of work motivation. Understanding of the nature of human motivation is gradually improving over the years. In the fields of social, personality, and developmental psychology there has been a great deal of research on motivation. There are different motivational theories, such as In-

centive Theory of Motivation, Achievement and Hierarchy Theory of motivation, Drive theories. But a good comprehensive model of work motivation is not available. The goal of our research is to define the category of work motivation. The object of our research is work motivation, its subject-matter being the definition of work motivation.

To understand the concept of work motivation, first of all it is necessary to give a clear definition of human motivation as a whole. The concept of motivation is being discussed in special literature within 3 aspects: motivation as a psychological state of a person who is performing a certain behavior; motivation as a process of encouraging a person to perform a certain behavior (the latter is referred to as *motivating*); and motivation as a set of reasons that determines a person to be engaged in a particular behavior. In our research motivation is considered according to a third aspect. A review of the literature reveals that over the past two decades, more than 800 publications have explored the intrinsic–extrinsic motivation dichotomy (Vallerand, R.J.). One of such theories is the SDT, which is a methodological base for our research. According to the SDT (Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M.), different types of motivation determine human behavior. These types of motivation are posited to differ in their inherent levels of self determination. Self-determination involves a true sense of choice, a sense of feeling freedom in doing what one has chosen to do. For example, a self-determined person chooses to behave in a manner that reflects his/her autonomy, and his behavior is not directed to achieve an external reward or escape aversive stimuli in the environment. In simple terms, the SDT focuses on the degree to which an individual's behavior is self-endorsed and self-determined.

Listed on a continuum from high to low levels of self-determination there exist intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation and amotivation. ***Intrinsically motivated*** behaviors are those in which one is engaged for one's own sake, in other words, for receiving pleasure and satisfaction from performing activities (Deci, E.L.). On the other hand, ***extrinsic motivation*** pertains to a wide variety of behaviors where the goals of action extend beyond those inherent in the activity itself. Besides intrinsic and extrinsic motivation Deci and Ryan proposed a third motivational concept namely, ***amotivation***, to fully understand human behavior. When amotivated, individuals experience a lack of contingency between their behaviors and outcomes. Their behaviors are neither intrinsically nor extrinsically motivated. Amotivated behaviors are the least self-determined because there is no sense of purpose and no expectations of reward or possibility of changing the course of events.

In our research we tried to apply the principals of the SDT in the sphere of work motivation and encouragement. According to the SDT, these four types of motivation are differently related to various types of outcomes. It takes place because these motivations differ in their inherent levels of self-determination, and because self-determination has been hypothesized to be associated with enhanced psychological functioning (Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M.).

So we would expect intrinsic work motivation to be mostly associated with positive outcomes (e.g., persistence). In contrast, the most negative outcomes (e.g., depressive states) will stem from amotivation followed by external regulation. In addition, STD postulates that the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness are central concepts to understand the initiation and regulation of behavior (Frederic Guay, Robert J. Vallerand). *Competence* implies a need for having an effect, for being effective in one's interactions with the environment. The need for *autonomy* is defined as a sense of feeling free from pressures and to have the possibility to make choices among several courses of action. In its turn, *relatedness* refers to interpersonal attachments and bonds developed between individuals, and is based on a fundamental striving for contact with others. So we would expect the effects of social factors in terms of their meaning for a person's feelings of competence, autonomy, and relatedness. That is, a social context in the workplace that offers people the possibility to satisfy their basic needs will lead to a self-determined type of motivation (intrinsic motivation) whereas events that thwart these needs will produce non-self-determined types of motivation (external regulation and amotivation). Some studies have shown that negative feedback is associated with a decrease in perceptions of competence and intrinsic motivation (Vallerand, R.J).

Thus we can give the definition of the work motivation focusing on the SDT. Work motivation is a set of reasons correlating with the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness of the worker determining one to be engaged in a professional activity. According to this theory we suppose that intrinsic motivation of workers contributes to employee output. The main psychological needs of employees should be taken into account. They should be treated as experienced and capable autonomous. Top managers have to develop corporate culture, including development social bonds in the workplace. This model (definition) of work motivation is consistent and gives a correct description of a group of needs (motivation factors) determining an employee behavior. It also explains the mechanism of correlation between motivation factors and employee behavior. Of course, additional empirical researches are necessary in order to check all aspects of this approach to work motivation.