

Work motivation

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Work Motivation Theory and Research at The Dawn Of The Twenty-First Century Based on this journal, the writers examine progress made in theory and research on needs, traits, values, cognition, and affect as well as three bodies of literature dealing with the context of motivation: national culture, job design, and models of person environment fit. They focus primarily on work reported between 1993 and 2003, concluding that goal setting, social cognitive, and organizational justice theories are the three most important approaches to work motivation to appear in the last 30 years. The writers reach 10 generally positive conclusions regarding predicting, understanding, and influencing work motivation in the new millennium. Miner (2003) concluded that motivation continues to hold a significant position in the eyes of scholars. Miner's conclusion is based on a comparison with other middle range theories of organizational behavior (OB).

The question remains on an absolute standard, motivation theory and research have fared well over the last quarter of a century. In answering this question, we provide a definition of the construct and an assessment of how the field of motivation in the workplace has evolved and progressed since the year in which the last chapter devoted exclusively to this topic appeared in the Annual Review of Psychology (ARP). We selectively review theory and research, emphasizing work published in the past decade, 1993–2003, with special emphasis given to research on contextual effects and mediating mechanisms. Work motivation is a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behavior and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration (Pinder 1998). where motivation is a process resulting from the interaction between

the individual and the environment. However, because of space limitations, the writers just focus on national culture, job design characteristics, and person-environment fit, omitting reviews of other exogenous sources of motivation. MOTIVATIONAL FRAMEWORK The framework used in reviewing the literature is consistent with Locke & Henne(1986).

Needs is followed by a focus on (b) personal traits. An individual difference variable rooted in needs is (c) values. Because context affects the extent to which needs are met and values are fulfilled, emphasis is given to (d) national culture, (e) job design characteristics, and (f) person context fit. Needs and values affect (g) cognition, particularly goals. Cognition plays an integral role in each of these concepts. Although (h) affective reactions need not depend on cognition (Bandura 1997), the two usually are reciprocally related (Lord & Kanfer 2002). Finally, affect is influenced by culture as well as by organizational norms (Lord & Harvey 2002). We close with an (i) assessment of progress in the field since 1977.

NEEDS Aslam et al. (2000) presented a process-based analysis of need structure and need salience derived from the social identity approach to organizational behavior. When personal identity is salient, needs to self-actualize and to enhance self esteem through personal advancement and growth become dominant. When social identity is salient, the need to enhance group based self-esteem through a sense of relatedness, respect, peer recognition, and attainment of group goals dominate. They stated that McGregor's (1960) Theory Y assumptions apply when the supervisor and employee share the same identity; Theory X assumptions apply when they

do not do so. 2 People are motivated to attain goals that are compatible with their self-identity.

Needs associated with a specific group membership are internalized; they serve as a guide for behavior in a specific working context. Need-based theories explain why a person must act; they do not explain why specific actions are chosen in specific situations to obtain specific outcomes.

Moreover, they do not easily account for individual differences. Hence, along with increased attention to needs, there has also been a resurgence of interest in individual differences, particularly with regard to the effects of job characteristics on employee motivation. TRAITS In summary, the importance of personality in predicting, understanding, and influencing choice, affect, and performance has been shown, as well as the importance of job characteristics (e. g. , autonomy) as a mediator/moderator. An issue identified by Locke & Latham (2004) that has yet to be addressed is how general variables such as personality are applied to and are mediated by task and situationally specific variables in affecting performance, or how they are moderated by situations and affect situational structuring and choice.

Locke (2001) showed that values and personality work through goals and self-efficacy to influence performance. Yet it is likely that some trait effects are direct and thus are not mediated. Research is needed on if, when, and why this occurs VALUES Values are rooted in needs and provide a principal basis for goals (Locke & Henne 1986). Locke & Henne (1986) argued that values are inherent in most work motivation theories. These theories focus

on the influence of one or several particular values, such as perceptions of fairness on action or on the effects of values in general (expectancy theory).

CONTEXT As a result of globalization, however, values have been studied within the context of a person's culture and job as well as person-environment fit.

National Culture In an attempt to tie together needs and values, Steers & Sanchez-Runde (2002) stated that national culture determines three key sets of distal sources of motivation: (a) people's self-concept, including personal beliefs, needs, and values; (b) norms about work ethic and the nature of "achievement," tolerance for ambiguity, locus of control, etc. ; and (c) "environmental factors". Based on their conceptual model, the authors concluded that these distal factors influence self-efficacy beliefs, work motivation levels, and goals, as well as the nature of incentives and disincentives to perform. Building on research findings of other scholars, Leung (2001) has offered four hypotheses for further research: (a) work teams in collectivistic cultures have higher levels of unconditional benevolence and positive social identity that, in turn, lead to higher levels of in-group involvement than is the case for groups that value individualism; (b) productivity and performance levels are more homogenous (not necessarily higher or lower) in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures; (c) motivational strategies by superiors have more effect on subordinates in cultures with high levels of power distance than in cultures low in power distance; and (d) negative reactions from supervisors in high power-distance cultures generate more negative reactions among workers than is the case in low power-distance cultures. Job Design Characteristics Gustafson &

Mumford (1995) reported that the ability of personality measures to predict performance as well as satisfaction increases when characteristics of a job are taken into account. Job autonomy can facilitate the time necessary for learning and development, which in turn improves job performance (Wall & Jackson 1995). Cordery (1997) argued the necessity of differentiating the importance of three dimensions of job autonomy, namely (a) method control as defined by the amount of discretion one has over the way in which work is performed, (b) timing control in terms of the influence one has over scheduling of work, and (c) discretion in setting performance goals. He found four interrelated dimensions that affect job autonomy, namely the extent to which the supervisor (a) provides clear attainable goals, (b) exerts control over work activities, (c) ensures that the requisite resources are available, and (d) gives timely accurate feedback on progress toward goal attainment.

PERSON CONTEXT-FIT The basic assumption underlying these models is that the relationship between person variables (such as needs or values) and both individual and organizational outcomes is contingent upon various features of the environment (such as the job, the organization, or culture). These models originated from Shaffer's (1953). He used Murray's (1938) needs to develop a goodness-of-fit model that takes into account individual differences in needs as well as the characteristics of jobs. Cable ; DeRue (2002), through a confirmatory factor analysis, found that employees differentiate among three varieties of fit: (a) person-environment fit (in which the focus is on organizational outcomes such as organizational identification and turnover decisions); (b) " needs-supplies" fit (in which the primary focus is on career-related outcomes such as employee satisfaction) and (c) job

demands–employee abilities fit. COGNITION As Locke ; Henne (1986) observed, cognition is inherent in motivation.

The sensations of pleasure and pain are informational. Based on needs, values, and the situational context, people set goals and strategize ways to attain them. Goal-Setting Theory A meta-analysis by Zetik ; Stuhlmacher (2002) revealed that negotiators who have specific, challenging, and conflicting goals consistently achieve higher profits than those with no goals. Consistent with goal-setting theory, the higher the goal, the higher the outcome. No effect was found for participation in setting goals. Contextual Conditions Seijts ; Latham (2000b) examined the applicability of goal-setting principles when personal goals are potentially incompatible with those of the group.

They found that social dilemmas are boundary conditions for the usual positive effects of goal setting. Self-enhancing personal goals have a detrimental effect on a group's performance. Audia et al. (2000) found that past success increased strategic decision makers' satisfaction, and satisfaction led them to increase their past strategies. Higher satisfaction was associated with higher self-efficacy and higher performance goals that increased dysfunctional persistence subsequent to a radical change in the environment. Implementation Intentions and Auto-Motive Goals Gollwitzer (1999) found that goal intentions that are accompanied by implementation intentions on tasks that are complex for people lead to a higher rate of goal attainment than do goal intentions only. An implementation intention is a

mental link that is created between a specific future situation and the intended goal-directed response. Thus, it is subordinate to goal intention.

Implementation intentions specify when, where, and how behavior is likely to lead to goal attainment. By forming implementation intentions, people strategically switch from conscious effortful control of their goal-directed behavior to being automatically controlled by situational cues. Bargh ; Ferguson (2000) summarized research findings that show that automatic or nonconscious goals produce the same outcomes as conscious goal pursuit in information processing, memory storage, social behavior, and task performance, as well as in self efficacy, self evaluation, and mood state. Feedback Ashford et al. (2003) stated that the processing of feedback likely involves monitoring the environment in an automatic preconscious fashion through visual, auditory, and relational cues. In their enumerative review, Ashford ; Black (1996) also suggested three primary motives for feedback seeking: instrumental to attain a goal and perform well, ego-based to defend or enhance one's ego, and image-based to protect or enhance the impression others have of oneself. Self-Regulation Goal setting and feedback seeking in relation to goals are the core of self-regulation (Latham ; Locke 1991). Self-regulatory processes supporting goal implementation were examined by Gollwitzer ; Bayer (1999).

They offered a time perspective on goal striving and self-regulatory processes as mediating the effects of intentions on behavior. The latter consists of four phases: predecisional (choosing among competing wishes, based on expected value); preactional (forming implementation intentions in

the service of the goal intention); actional (bringing goal direct actions to a successful end); and postactional (evaluation as to whether further action is necessary) Expectancy Theory After reviewing the literature, Ambrose ; Kulik (1999) concluded that little or no advances have been made in expectancy theory research in the past decade. Ambrose ; Kulik concluded that there are few theoretical or applied reasons for additional research on the application of this theory to organizational behavior Social Cognitive Theory SCT research shows empirically that the effect of environmental antecedents and consequences are mediated by cognitive variables. SCT emphasizes dual control systems in the self-regulation of motivation, namely a proactive discrepancy production system that works in concert with a reactive discrepancy reduction system (Bandura 2001). Thus, people are motivated by the foresight of goals, not just the hindsight of shortfalls. A specific high goal creates negative discrepancies to be mastered. Effort and resources are mobilized based on anticipatory estimates of what is necessary for goal attainment.

AFFECT/EMOTION Mowday ; Sutton (1993) argued against an overemphasis on cognition in the study of motivation. This is because moods and emotions influence the attainment of complex long-term goals (Lord ; Kanfer 2002) and are interrelated with the other constructs we have discussed. Erez ; Isen (2002) showed that people with higher levels of positive affect exhibited higher levels of persistence, effort, self-reported motivation, and performance on two different tasks. Positive affect was associated with higher levels of valence and expectancy beliefs at these tasks as well as higher levels of instrumentality beliefs at one of them. Organizational

A significant body of research on work motivation that has appeared since Korman et al. 's 1977 review is conceptualizations of organizational justice (Greenberg 1987).

These studies, based on sociolegal research of disputants' reactions to a conflict resolution, supplement Adam's equity theory, the fundamental idea of which is that individuals develop beliefs about the inputs they provide in their employment relationship as well as about the outcomes they receive in return, and they form attitudes about the ratio between inputs and outcomes in relation to the corresponding ratios they perceive among comparison others. The premise of organizational justice is that fair procedures enhance employee acceptance of organizational outcomes. second premise, namely that in addition to being fair, leaders must be perceived as fair with regard to outcomes and processes that serve an important psychological need (Greenberg 1990).

CONCLUSIONS First, three theories dominate the motivation literature: goal-setting, social cognitive, and organizational justice. Second, whereas theory and research in the third quarter of the twentieth century focused almost exclusively on cognition (Latham ; Budworth 2004), this is no longer true. Third, the ability to predict, understand, and influence motivation in the workplace has increased significantly as a result of the attention that has been given to all rather than only a few aspects of an employee's motivation. Fourth, whereas the dependent variables historically studied were limited to traditional measures of job performance and satisfaction, today's dependent variables range from citizenship to counterproductive behavior.

Fifth, Cronbach's (1957) plea a half century ago for experimental and correlational psychology to combine forces has been heeded. Sixth, the importance of context to motivation has been recognized much more in recent years than in the past; so much so that an additional chapter could be devoted to it. Seventh, these advances in the study of motivation may reflect the fact that this subject is no longer restricted to the research findings of North Americans.

Eighth, behavioral scientists in the latter half of the twentieth century responded positively to William James' exhortation to systematically study consciousness. Ninth, the antagonisms among theorists that existed throughout much of the twentieth century have either disappeared or have been minimized. Tenth, the nomological nets related to work motivation constructs are thicker and tighter than ever before, but the size of the aggregate net (metaphorically speaking) is not growing at a rate commensurate with the energy that scholars and practitioners have invested since 1977. Accordingly, Steers (2001) recently recognized the limitations of current theory and research in work motivation, and issued a call for groundbreaking papers for publication in a special edition of the *Academy of Management Review* in 2004. It is too soon to assess whether any of the papers published in response to his call will