

## **THE FREDERICK HERZBERG TWO FACTOR THEORY OF JOB SATISFACTION AND ITS APPLICATION TO BUSINESS RESEARCH**

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### **Abstract**

*This paper critically examines Frederick Herzberg's two factors theory of job satisfaction and its application to business research. The two factor theory of motivation explains the factors that employees find satisfactory and non-satisfactory in their place of employment. These factors are the hygiene factors and motivators. The hygiene factors when present are characterized by insufficiency that can't satisfy the employees in their work place but the motivators which refers to the nature of the job, provide satisfaction and lead to better motivation. This paper adds to the present knowledge on what motivates employees in industries and academics with the aid of other theories that relate to the Frederick Herzberg theory. It therefore creates a template for re-evaluation of the thinking and viewpoint that motivator factors are rated above hygiene factors in every organization.*

**Keyword:** *Frederick Herzberg, hygiene factors, motivators, employee and organization*

### **INTRODUCTION**

There are various motivation theories that have influenced the way organizations manage employees to achieve the creation of a motivated and productive work force. These theories helps to explain why people in an organization behave the way they do and advice on factors and strategies, that when employed can get the best out of employees in terms of their commitment and enthusiasm to work. Vroom and Deci (1970) stated that "the question of what motivates workers to perform effectively is not an easy one to answer". A cursory look into the definition of motive posits that Motive is the reason behind an individual's behavior. Motivation refers to the forces within an individual that drives and propels the individual, which accounts for the level, direction and persistence of effort expended at work by the individual in question (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 1985).



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Herzberg, (1959) in a bid to understanding employee satisfaction and motivation, set out to determine the effect of attitude on motivation by asking people to describe situations where they felt really good and really bad about their jobs. His findings were interesting discovering that people who felt good about their jobs gave very different responses from the people who felt bad about their jobs. And as such the results unraveled the basis of Herzberg's 'motivation hygiene theory' also called the two –factors theory'. Ratzburg, (2003) who also observed the motivation of individuals, stated alongside Herzberg (1959) that certain characteristics of a job are consistently related to job satisfaction while different factors are associated with job dissatisfaction. This is classified into motivator factors and hygiene factors which formed the basis of his motivational-hygiene model on which Herzberg's theory is propounded.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

To better understand employee attitude and motivation, there is the need to dive into and review other theories and the views of other researchers about Fredrick Herzberg's theory. According to the Arab British Academy for Higher Education (2016) the history of the Frederick Herzberg highlighted two factor theories and how the motivation and hygiene factors brought about "maintenance factors". According to the writer, the factors causing job dissatisfaction are supervision, company policy, working relationships, working conditions and wages. While the factors responsible for satisfaction is achievement, recognition, growth, advancement, and responsibility. It also highlighted the implications on management stating that they should not only provide hygiene factors as the cause of dissatisfaction, but also they must provide factors intrinsic to the work itself in order for employees to be satisfied with their jobs. Herzberg argued that job enrichment is important for intrinsic motivation and it is a continuous management process.

**Smith (2008)** compared the Herzberg dual factor to the Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs. Abraham Maslow is a psychologist who is known for the theory of motivation, which outlines the basic elements that people need to feel motivated and exist in the society. Abraham Maslow stated that humans have needs that are: psychological, security, social, esteem, and self-actualizing in nature and all of these needs in itself leads to satisfaction or lessens dissatisfaction and also increases efficiency and effectiveness.

While Frederick Herzberg stated in his theory that humans, employees have intrinsic and extrinsic needs that can lead to dissatisfaction or satisfaction or reduce dissatisfaction and increase satisfaction. These needs vary from working conditions, salary, responsibilities to security, growth, recognition, achievement, interpersonal relations and company policies. From all of these we see that the two theories are a stone throw from each other.

According to the **Chartered Management Institute (2007)**, the needs of man can be divided into two levels which are higher level needs which involve humans to grow psychologically, and the second is the lower level needs which are needs as an animal to avoid deprivation and pain. The

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article emphasized that some factors in the workplace meet the first set of needs but not the second set of needs and vice-versa. As we know the first set of needs are called hygiene factors and the second set of needs are called motivators or motivation factors. This research focused more on the hygiene factors, hence it talked about the KITA(KICK IN THE ASS) which was used by Herzberg to inform managers that employee productivity in an organization is not dependent on how much they are it will give them force or push to get work done, reducing their salaries, setting unrealistic policies will only lead to poor productivity as humans in general need something positive to motivate them to work. Sometimes including them in the decision making process gives them a sense of responsibility hereby giving them a sense of responsibility.

The kick in the ass factor as brought about by Frederick Herzberg is just simply encourages managers to look for mediums to motivate employees in terms of a conducive environment, job trainings, increasing job descriptions, increasing wages and also giving employees bonuses, these factors and more would naturally kick the employees in the ass as (KITA) is a means through which employers motivate employees to attain their goals and objectives efficiently and effectively.

According to Gawel (1954), a study by members of the Tennessee career ladder program (TCLP). This study found evidence that the teachers in the program possess a different behavior from the people employed in business. Specifically, the findings disagree with Herzberg's theory relating the importance of money as a motivator, and Maslow's theory with regards to the position of esteem in a person's hierarchy of needs. The writer did a survey using teachers in elementary and secondary school. The article discussed how self-esteem and self-actualization needs by Maslow should not just focus on increasing teachers wages stating that it is not the most important means of motivating them but also the esteem and self-actualization needs of teachers should be paid close attention to as it is more important than high salary, which has brought about loss of good teachers to higher paying jobs where they might gain self-actualization needs.

The scholar used questionnaires as a means of gathering information and data collection, and he gathered that teachers desire esteem needs and a need for self-actualization and more than they desire higher paying salaries, he states that does things have been neglected and thereby brought about lack of good teachers. The Frederick Herzberg and Abraham Maslow theories should be brought into schools as it is not only valuable to the business world, the more the esteem needs and self-actualization needs, the more the good teachers and the more the increment in the salaries of teachers, the more the motivation to work but it doesn't guarantee satisfaction. The Frederick Herzberg and Abraham Maslow theories should be introduced in schools as it is also a business organization.

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Riina (2014) in the article “Hr’s and Herzberg’s Opinion on Different Factors Motivating People” tried to answer the questions of the relationship between recognition and wages as motivators and also examine the factors managers should take into consideration when trying to get results using employees as the resources. The article was trying to motivate employers on what they should focus on when trying to gain employee productivity in their organizations.

They adopted an employee satisfaction survey made by World at Work institution and a HR consulting firm Watson Wyatt was used as the secondary data in the research analysis because of its relevance and connections with the results gotten from the survey made particularly for this theses. The article stated that one of the best ways of motivating employees is by giving employees feedback and challenges to unravel, hence, leading to a sense of responsibility. The writer also defined the meaning of human resource management and why it needed in an organization. Dessler *et al.*, (2013) stated that human resource management should ensure that management gets results through people. Stating that the possibilities of failure if one hires the wrong people or does not properly motivate subordinates, the results will not be as expected (Dessler *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, human resource management puts the employees that come in check to ensure productivity and profitability.

Conclusively, it is important for managers to allow employee participate in the work, that is giving them responsibilities with little or no supervision as it increases their level of satisfaction which brings about self-advancement and also employees should be allowed at some point to take part in the decision making process so as to allow them get a sneak peek into what the organization is about and it allows for them to handle it as their own. Also training should be organized as it brings about job enrichment thereby leading to high performance on the part of the employees and lastly among other things they should be given the right competitive salary so as to enable them meet their social needs and would help keep the skilled employees in the organization.

According to the Ghanaian Perspective Act (2011) there is a need to carry out a study in a way that seeks to educate the readers on what motivates the Ghanaian worker and also re-evaluates the viewpoint and thinking by workers on motivation stating that workers rate motivator factors higher than the hygiene factors in their work setting. Conclusively, in Ghana, it would be safer for managers to create a balance between motivator and hygiene factors as it seems to motivate the Ghanaian workers more. There is a popular saying in Ghana that a hungry man is an angry man and certainly a hungry man’s performance and commitment to work drops and affects organizational performance; this enforces the need to pay major attention to effectiveness and efficiency in Ghanaian organizations.

Brooks (2002) in his work, the Motivational Theory In Practice By Tesco Limited, a US based company stated that Tesco recognizes that employee motivation is an important factor for the

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continuous growth of an organization. This case study analyzes how Tesco limited motivates its employees by providing intensives that include increasing their knowledge, skills, job trainings and development, also provision of relevant and timely reward and recognition. Conclusively, employees are motivated by their job content and lastly, a motivated workforce will work harder and achieve greater output in less time, thereby reducing labor costs.

Nakhate (2003) stated that talented employees should be held with high esteem as they foster organizational performance and the major way of keeping employees, especially the productive ones is by employing motivators that will keep them on check. It emphasized that workers or humans in general appreciate money but money alone cannot foster productivity other factors or motivators such as bonuses, promotions, trainings should be considered in organizations. Conclusively, the article stated that theory suggests that job enrichment is important for intrinsic motivation in order for effective utilization of employees, employee jobs should be enriched in a manner that the employees are satisfied not on monetarily but job context wise.

Yusoff, Kian and Idris, (2013) stated in the article “Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory On Work Motivation; Does It Work For Today’s Environment?” that as opposed to Frederick Herzberg view on motivators which stated that motivators reduce dissatisfaction and does not totally increase employee satisfaction, this article begs to differ as it argues that the motivators increase job satisfaction and that the Frederick Herzberg theory should be reviewed and the settings of the theory should be updated. conclusively these scholars after having carried out research in different countries states that the motivation theory perspective by Frederick Herzberg does not apply in today’s environment that motivators bring about complete satisfaction in today’s environment.

Baah (2010) sought to educate its readers on the factors that bring about the satisfaction for Ghanaian workers specifically. It also seeks to add that Ghanaian workers are more effective when motivators and hygiene factors are balanced as these factors are taken seriously by workers in Ghana as they lead to employee performance in Ghana.

Conclusively, in Ghana, it would benefit them more for managers to create a balance between motivator and hygiene factors laying more importance on the hygiene factors as it tends to motivate the Ghanaian workers more and a saying goes that “a Ghana hungry man is an angry man” and therefore no hungry person can be productive to an organization.

According to Ghazi, Shahzada and Khan (2013), in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa University, teachers were working with public sectors in Pakistan were selected among the sample of 300 university teachers from four universities and after the research it was concluded that the productivity and performance of a university teacher is dependent on more of the hygiene factors even though the motivator factors should not be ruled out but university teachers in Pakistan are more effective



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when the hygiene factors are put in place. Upon fulfillment of the hygiene factors, university teachers in Pakistan would be more effective.

Thirupathy (1996) stated that employees should be kicked in the ass in form of job enrichment. This scholar simply stated that employee's jobs should be enriched. The kick in the ass factors should not only be by words of mouth, the employees should be given incentives that would further enhance organization goals and objectives efficiently and effectively.

### **A Critique of The Frederick Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction.**

House and Wigdor (1968) stated that satisfiers and dissatisfies should not have been generalized as satisfier for one person is dissatisfies for another person. The scholars argued that Frederick Herzberg's research was not well carried out as he did not carefully pinpoint that satisfaction and dissatisfaction can be different depending on the employees. They also stated that recognition does not always have to be from superiors, it could be from your coworkers, and also your customers.

Dunnette, Campbell and Hakel (1967) reported that the Two-Factor theory did not give enough details on the similarities between motivation and satisfaction. Also, satisfaction and dissatisfaction sources were oversimplified, more details and research would have been carried out for one of the most widely accepted theories, used in the workplace.

Fauziah, Yusoff, Kian, Talha & Idris (2013), reported that in their critique on the study they stated that they do not agree that the hygiene factors are the key or major catalyst to prevent dissatisfaction, but that dissatisfactions differs depending on the school or organization an employee finds oneself it also depends on the need of the employees as every human being has their own different set of needs therefore my satisfaction might not be your satisfaction. These hygiene factors also depend on the job context or description as the key roles would determine a particular person's satisfaction and dissatisfaction. It assumes that an individual's can place high preferences on hygiene factors such as supervision and working environment, which can yield positive effects towards their job satisfactions, rather than prevent dissatisfactions only and keep their feelings neutral

Stello (2011) stated that Frederick Herzberg's work or theory was too simple; he did not agree that work itself was one factor that should have been added as extrinsic and Intrinsic factors that fostered job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Farr (1997) stated that although Herzberg findings contributed greatly in the business world today which ranges from schools, organizations. He stated that the information gathered previously from the accountants and engineers was enough to conclude that he has successfully found the causes of satisfaction and dissatisfaction all over the world ,he stated that the respondents might not all give true information in other words the respondents could have answered the questions with some form of bias, or some might have answered the questions with fear of losing his or her job .Therefore the findings might not be

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totally right even though Frederick Herzberg work has contributed greatly in the business world today .

Conclusively, testing a hypothesis is not always a valid way of coming into conclusion of a particular theory or findings as it does not always determine the validity of a research or theory (Smerek and Peterson , 2007). In the article “Herzberg’s Two Factor Theory Of Job Satisfaction”, the scholar stated that people have different views and misunderstanding of the theory and therefore bringing about misunderstanding amongst behaviorists and also different critics of the Frederick Herzberg theory. It was argued that unlike what the theory stated that motivator and hygiene factors brought about reduced dissatisfaction and not complete satisfaction but, this article begged to differ as it was stated that from their findings, motivator factors foster complete satisfaction and hygiene factors brings about dissatisfaction. Conclusively, the basic argument in this article is that only one factor is responsible for satisfaction which is the motivator factor, and that the hygiene factor is basically responsible for dissatisfaction than satisfaction it was gathered in Frederick Herzberg theory that the motivator and hygiene factors are just incentives that should be put in place to reduce dissatisfaction in workplace and increase satisfaction but not give total satisfaction but an incentive to basically motivate and push employee to be more efficient and productive in the work place, this article disagreed stating that the motivator factor is the key incentive to gaining satisfaction in workplace and the hygiene factor is basically responsible for dissatisfaction in workplace.

Wong (2009), opined that in Malaysian universities, all motivators bring about job dissatisfaction and hygiene factors bring about job satisfaction ,the scholar stated that the motivators factors such as work itself , advancement , recognition were of no value or are not taken into cognizance by the Malaysian faculty members stating that the hygiene factor especially the salary, policy and administration that were not taken seriously were in fact of more values to the Malaysian faculty members . Also the scholar mentioned that Frederick Herzberg in his theory did not take into proper consideration the cultural barriers as different cultures differ from each other. For example, a man working in Japan has job security as his job is basically permanent, but a man in Nigeria knows that he or she has to really work had to stay in position in the organization as his job can be sniffed off him at any point in time. Therefore, the scholar stated that culture in Malaysia has an influence or impact on a Malaysian employee’s take on job satisfaction and he stated that the job attitude pattern for Malaysian faculty members is way different from Frederick Herzberg two factor theory or dual factor model.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The approach used for conducting this research is JSTOR and EBRARY, for related academic on the Frederick Herzberg two factor theory taking into account its application, criticism and also the application of the theory. The selection of these databases was due to the fact that they are

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supported by different scholars and publishers in the field and also they cover a wide range of disciplines. Also, access to varieties of academic journals and publications are provided. Data was also gathered from the internet, researcher materials and articles on the subject matter were also examined together with relevant books, websites and conference papers amongst other secondary sources of data.

## RESULTS

### Hygiene Factors

Employee like everyone else are faced with issues that as to do with comfort and more so because of high cost of living and sometimes unfavorable economic conditions. It is therefore not surprising that most Labor issues that are brought to the table of the NLC (Nigerian Labor Congress) on wages and salaries are very increasing also ASUU (Academic Staff Union of Universities), NASU (Non Academic Staff Union). A recent example was during the administration of past president Good-luck Ebele Jonathan when the academic staffs and non-academic staff went on a 6 months strike with the intent to get their salaries paid and all benefit due with regards to money paid. This triggered Medical Practitioners to also go on strike with their own reasons being the delayed payment of salaries as well. With regards to Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory and looking at the experiences of ASUU, NASU and Medical practitioners it is safe to say money and job security are paramount to achieving better the motivators are key in realizing a better working environment.

### The Motivators

In most organization where they don't have challenges with employee and as such their employees are ready to give their very best to the smooth running of the organization are characterized by opportunities for advancement, fair treatment, better and safer working conditions, challenging and interesting jobs positions, autonomy on the job and responsibility. Hence these employees are motivated by the motivator factors as postulated in Herzberg theory. And as such team work and group cohesiveness has been seen to be essential for a conducive and productive working environment and important in establishing positive workgroup relationship.

### How to achieve job satisfaction in business

Based on the above analysis, managers and organizations should do more to make the work environment more challenging and interesting. It is a fact that a bored employee is not motivated or productive. More often than not, workers in most public institution are accused of being unmotivated and unproductive at the work place. It is safe to say employee are not lazy but the workers have jobs that are often not designed to constantly challenge them to be innovative and doing away with repetition and monotony in their organizations.



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Cognizant of this, managers in collaboration with human resource department should structure jobs and responsibilities so the new challenges are presented to employee on a regular basis. And this is what Herzberg termed as “Job Enrichment”, also it is essential that managers assure their employee of commensurate pay that are essential to emphasis to employees that pay is based on performance and that “bonuses” and other benefits are awarded for extra effort put in by those who are committed to advancing the fortunes of the companies they work. Furthermore workers are motivated not only by the financial rewards but also by the recognition that they get from their manager. Additionally avoiding micromanaging, ensuring fairness in pay structures, promotions and work allocations and eschewing favoritism, nepotism and cronyism by managers would be essential to addressing employee motivation issues in organizations.

## CONCLUSION

As Frederick Herzberg explained in his theory, it does not take only the motivators factors to motivate employees neither does it take the hygiene factors to remove dissatisfaction. To motivate and satisfy employees, managers need to effectively blend the factors well to suit the special needs of their employees. It is necessary for the management of organizations to take into cognizance the Frederick Herzberg two factor theory, as it is the bedrock of organizational effectiveness, efficiency, productivity and performance. Any organization that seeks to be profitable and productive should not just employ talents or professionals but organizations should learn have a set out plan for incentives that would motivate the employees to be productive to the organization. The employees should be first in every of their decision making and policy making as the employees would determine the going forward or going backward of the organization and the profitability and non-profitability of every organization is solely dependent on the employees and also in the academic field the Frederick Herzberg theory will be researched further on to critically answer loops as regards to the theory.

The management of organizations should carefully study the Frederick Herzberg two factor theory as applying this to their work ethics or organizations culture would determine how far the company, business, school would go and how productive and successful the organization would become. Once employees are treated with values the organization would be treated with value.

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