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Motivation and Productivity in the Library

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Introduction

Employee motivation is important in libraries, as in any other organization. This article attempts to identify the place of motivation in developing human resources in the library. This attempt begins with the need to define human resources, human resources development, and motivation, and to discuss theories of motivation and the literature of motivation as they pertain to libraries.

The Concept of Human Resources

UNECA (1990) conceptualizes human resources as the body of knowledge, skills, attitudes, physical, and managerial efforts required to manipulate land, capital, and technology, to produce goods and services for human consumption and welfare. Human resources includes:

1. Technical skill and abilities acquired from education, training, and experience. It indicates the ability to use knowledge, methods, and techniques in the performance of library tasks.
2. Human skills, which is the ability to work with and through people. It includes the understanding of motivation and the application of effective leadership.
3. Conceptual skill, which incorporates the ability to understand the complexity of the overall organization.

Human resources includes two major activities. The first is recruitment, selection, compensation, discipline, appraisal, and welfare of employees. The second is working with employees to improve their efficiency and productivity. The activities that enable individuals and groups to acquire new knowledge and skills and assume new roles and responsibilities are usually referred to as human resources development (Ojo, 1994).

Human Resources Development

Nadler (1970) defines human resources development as a "series of organized activities conducted within a specified time and designed to produce behavior change" in individuals and organizations. The key point is learning. Ojo (1994) remarks that, the "organized activities contained in the definition provided above embraced a carefully developed learning activity with identifiable components of objectives, actions, and evaluation. These conditions must exist in all forms of human resources development."

Ideally, human resources development should provide solutions to problems such as a shortage of employees, employees who are inadequately skilled and efficient, high turnover, organizational expansion, career planning, and training needs.

What is Motivation?

Motivation has been defined as:

- the psychological process that gives behavior purpose and direction (Kreitner, 1995)
- a predisposition to behave in a purposive manner to achieve specific unmet needs (Buford, Bedeian, and Linder, 1995)
- an internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need (Higgins, 1994); and the will to achieve (Bedeian, 1993). defined motivation as
- all those inner-striving conditions described as wishes, desires, drives, etc. (Donnelly, Gibson, and Ivancevich 1995)
- the way urges, aspirations, drives and needs of human beings direct or control or explain their behavior (Appleby 1994)
- some driving force within an individual by which they attempts to achieve some goal in order to fulfill some needs or expectations (Mullins, 1996).

Mitchell (1982) identifies four common characteristics that underlie the definition of motivation. The characteristics are:

- Motivation is an individual phenomenon
- Motivation is intentional
- Motivation is multifaceted
- Motivation theories predict behavior

Based on these characteristics, Mitchell defines motivation as the "degree to which an individual wants and chooses to engage in certain specified manner." Mullins (1996) gives a three-part classification of successful motivation.

- Economic rewards
- Intrinsic satisfaction
- Social relationships

These needs help determine motivation and performance. Motivation involves effort, persistence, and goals (Maslow 1959). An unsatisfied need is the starting point in the motivation process and becomes the first link in the chain of events leading to behavior. The unsatisfied need leads the individual to perform behavior to satisfy the need. Achieving the goal satisfies the need and the process of motivation is complete.

Understanding Motivation Using Theories

Theories of motivation can help us understand why people behave as they do. No theory has a universal approach to explain human behavior, because people are too far complex (Donnelly, et al. 1996). Two important groups of theories are content theories and process theories. Content theories are concerned with identifying what factors in an individual or the work environment that energize and sustain behavior. Process theories try to describe how behavior is energized, directed, and sustained. Process theories first attempt to define variables in choice, i.e., Should I work hard? (Choice); How hard do I work? (Persistence). Two content theories and two process theories will be discussed.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's hierarchy has had widespread acceptance since it was introduced. The theory posits that behavior at a particular moment is determined by the strongest need. Maslow hypothesized five levels of needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow 1954 and Lindner 1998). He placed them in a framework referred to as the hierarchy of needs because of the different levels of importance. Maslow states that, if all needs are unsatisfied at a particular time, satisfaction of the predominant need is most pressing. Those that come first must be satisfied before a higher-level need comes into play.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg advanced another content explanation of motivation in 1959. His theory was based on a study of need satisfaction among engineers and accountants. The theory is referred to as the two-factor theory of motivation (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1959 and Lindner 1998). Herzberg and his associates asked the subjects to think of times both when they felt especially good and when they felt especially bad about their jobs. Each employee was then asked to describe the conditions that led to these feelings (Donnelly, Gibson and Ivancevich, 1995). Based on the study, Herzberg reached two conclusions:

1. Some job conditions operate primarily to dissatisfy employees when they are not present, but the presence of these conditions does not build strong motivation. Herzberg called these "maintenance factors" and he identified ten:

- Company policy and administration
- Technical supervision
- Interpersonal relations with the supervisor
- Interpersonal relations with peers
- Interpersonal relations with subordinates
- Salary
- Job security
- Personal life
- Working conditions
- Status

2. Some job conditions build high-level motivation and job satisfaction, but if they are not present, they do not prove highly dissatisfying. Herzberg described six of these "motivational factors":

- Achievement
- Recognition
- Advancement
- The work itself
- Responsibility
- Growth

Equity Theory

Equity theory was made popular by Adams (1965). It posits that perceived inequity is a motivational force. Workers evaluate equity using a ratio of inputs to outputs. Inputs include qualification, experience, effort, and ability. Outcomes include benefits. Inequities occur when workers feel that outcomes are not comparable to inputs.

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory was presented by psychologist Victor Vroom in 1966. Vroom asserts that employees are motivated to make choices among behaviours. If employees believe that effort will be rewarded, there will be motivated effort, that is, they will decide to work harder to receive a reward. Variables in expectancy theory are choice, expectancy, and preference. Choice is the freedom to select from a number of behaviours. Expectancy is the belief that certain behaviours will or will not be successful. Preferences are the values a person attaches to different outcomes.

Motivation in the Development of Human Resources in the Library

A library is an organization whose mission is to provide information to its users. The library staff are the human resources, who provide information services using library resources. How well the services are provided depends on how well the human resources are motivated and developed. Motivation is crucial to the development of human resources in the library in the following ways:

1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is apparent in library employment. Acquiring a job and looking for job security help satisfy physiological and safety needs. When those needs are satisfied, employees look to their need for belonging and self-esteem. The need for self-esteem and self-actualization are represented in library human resources development efforts that focus on training, creativity, problem-solving, and so on.

2. The maintenance and motivational factors of Herzberg's two-factor theory play important roles in the development of human resources in the library. Herzberg's believed that motivators must be build into the job. These include responsibility, autonomy, respect and recognition from superiors, a sense of well-being, and the opportunity to have one's ideas adopted.

3. Equity theory indicates likewise has a place in the library. Workers compare their pay, work schedules, benefits, or any reward with what is being received by other employees. Unless the reward system is carefully administered, it could result in problems of perceived or actual inequity.

4. Expectancy theory can be used in the development of human resources in libraries. The logic of expectancy theory is that individuals exert effort for a performance that results in preferred rewards. Expectancy can be influenced by selecting individuals with particular skills and abilities, providing training, and providing support to achieve a particular level of performance.

Strategies for Increasing Motivation

Job Enrichment

The idea of quality work life has received attention for several decades (Macy, 1979). Workers become increasingly dissatisfied and frustrated by routine tasks. The result may be lower output, poor attitude, lower quality, absenteeism, high turnover, and pressure for better conditions and greater participation in decision-making. Herzberg (1968) contributed the theory of job enrichment as a motivational technique. Job enrichment provides employees with an opportunity to grow psychologically and mature in a job. Job enrichment attempts to make the job itself motivational (Michael and Paul, 1989). Research indicates that jobs higher in enrichment factors result in higher satisfaction; however, research also indicates that enriched jobs require more training time and result in slightly higher anxiety and stress (Michael, 1988). Job enrichment increases a job's range and depth, which refers to the number of activities and the autonomy, responsibility, discretion, and control.

Merit Pay

The money that employees receive is actually a package made up of salary, and other fringe benefits such as transport, housing, furniture, medical allowance. Others include meal subsidy and utility

allowances. The motivation theories discussed, suggest that and fringe benefits can have some influence on effort and persistence.

The money that employees receive is actually a package of salary and benefits. Theories of motivation suggest that salary and benefits have influence on effort and persistence. Pay has the potential to satisfy each of the five needs in Maslow's hierarchy. In Herzberg's two-factor model pay is a maintenance factor that should not contribute significantly to motivation. In expectancy theory, pay can satisfy a variety of needs and influence choice and behavior, while in equity theory, pay is a major outcome that one compares with other employees. A number of studies reveal that, in order to motivate, a salary plan must demonstrate that good performance leads to higher levels of pay, minimize any negative consequences of good performance, and relate other rewards to good performance (Milkorich and Newman, 1988).

Flexible working Hours

Libraries are faced with an increasingly diverse workforce that includes nursing mothers, single parents with young children, employees with very different responsibilities, and those taking classes or pursuing degrees to improve skills and abilities or for self-improvement. The concept of flexible working hours has motivational appeal to many library staff.

Flexible time is intended to ensure that the work of the organization is accomplished and, at the same time, to permit library staff and their supervisors to establish work schedules that recognize individual and family needs. Research indicates that flexible scheduling can be motivational in that job satisfaction is improved and absenteeism reduced (Pierce, 1989). The ability to accommodate employee needs is a healthy and positive approach to motivation.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It is the responsibility of the library management to discover the potential in each library staff member, and to apply the appropriate motivational strategy. Motivation is an individual matter and one needs to know and understand the individuals that are to be motivated. Individuals have their own goals and aspirations. Individual employees are being asked to make the library succeed. One cannot hire only the hand and the brain; the owner of that hand and brain must always come along.

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