Leadership and Employees' Motivation

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Abstract

Leadership is not just about leaders, it is a unitary one, based on balance and which is often the success formula. It is well known that people is the most important resource of an organization. They represent a decisive factor in organizational success or failure. Although employers are aware of this, they do not always invest or make changes, ending up with a deadlock and facing serious problems. Motivation constitutes not only an important tool in the process of self-regulation, but also a driving force of psychological and human development. The purpose of the paper is to illustrate the importance of leadership in motivating employees. In order to reach this aim the authors conducted an exploratory research in the milling and bakery industry by using the questionnaire as a tool. The results show that motivation represents a factor of influence at the workplace and leaders should identify and meet employees' needs.

Key words: motivation, leadership, leader, motivational theories, milling and bakery industry
J.E.L. classification: M12, J16, J28.

1. Introduction

Motivation is the tool used to make people work in order to achieve goals, which is suggested by the very meaning of this word. So, the word "motivation" comes from the Latin word "moves" which means to move or to get moved (Popescu, 2013, p. 211). Vagu *et al* (2007) provide a different sense of the concept of motivation as they point out that it is the sum of the reasons that make someone to perform an action for certain purposes. Thus, it can be seen that each person needs specific reasons in order to achieve certain goals or to reach certain objectives.

This concept is also applicable within an organization because without a strong motivation, employees will not work long term to achieve the organizational goals. That is why the leader is the person who has the most responsibility for employees' motivation. The leader's responsibility for motivation was also surprised by Boboc (2003) who claims that mentoring, understanding the employees, and motivating staff and inspiring them, are among the leader's roles. Moreover, Adair (quoted by Boboc, 2003) argues that the great quality of leaders is their ability to motivate people. The purpose of the paper is to illustrate the importance of leadership in motivating employees.

2. Literature review

During the time numerous definitions of motivation have been formulated. According to Nicolescu and Verboncu (2007), motivation is "the correlation of the needs, aspirations and interests of human resources within the organization with the achievement of the objectives and the exercise of the tasks and responsibilities within the organization". In this definition it can be seen the authors emphasize the correlation between the needs of the organization and the employees, a

correlation that allows the objectives of the organization to become the objectives of the employees**.**

The link between leadership and the motivation process is highlighted by Popescu (2013, p. 49), who argues that "leadership is a concrete activity by which an individual or more exert an influence on others by which they try and sometimes succeed motivation and change which facilitate the achievement of group or organizational goals. " Great leaders, such as Steve Jobs, proved to be great motivators and they highly influenced the organizational culture (Toma *et al*, 2013; Săseanu *et al*, 2014).

Maslow's theory is one of the most well-known motivational theories. The theory distinguishes five basic needs, which are hierarchically linked to each other. Needs are listed from the basic to the most complex: physiological needs, safety needs, membership needs, need for self-esteem and the need for self-updating. When a need is satisfied, the following "greater" need arises.

Alderfer's ERG theory compresses Maslow's five/seven needs in three categories - life needs similar to Maslow's physiological and safety needs, relational needs - are satisfied by interactions and communication with others, development needs - are focused on the development of new abilities / skills, the maximum utilization of the potential of each person, on self-realization. In comparison with Maslow's theory, ERG theory considers it unnecessary to fulfil the basic needs in order to meet the higher ones.

Herzberg's theory is made up of two factors: hygiene factors and development factors (Herzberg, 1968). Hygiene factors refer to the context of work and the environment in which work is carried out and include the policy and administration of the organization: the wage; job security; surveillance and technical control; interpersonal relationships with supervisors and leadership of the organization; status; personal life. Development factors are related to the nature of work, responsibility, recognition, advancement, personal development. Hygiene factors have no motivating potential, but help to avoid dissatisfaction. On the other hand, the factors of development are those that lead to motivation and satisfaction of the employees.

McClelland's theory starts from the premise that the needs of an individual reflect personal characteristics (McClelland, 1971). It outlines three needs: achievement, affiliation, power. People who have a strong realization need workloads have a moderate difficulty so they can be successfully completed, focus on their own efforts and abilities rather than those of the team, prefer to receive feedback on tasks achieved, avoids routine. People who have a desire to learn have social intelligence, learn social networks very easily, communicate frequently with social networks, avoid conflicts. The need for power is met in people who want to influence others and pictures as leader in a group.

Vroom's theory of expectations contains three key variables - valence, instrumentality, expectation (Vroom, 1964). Valence consists of the anticipatory satisfaction of a person to achieve certain results that can be perceived as attractive or unattractive. Instrumentality refers to the likelihood that a direct, performative result leads to a less manifest result but is developed by the employee on a personal level or needs. If the probability is high and the valence attributed to the personally developed result is high, expectation arises. Waiting measures the degree to which a person believes one can achieve that direct, performing result. The three variables are the motivational force.

Adams's equity theory starts from the premise that employees compare their efforts at work and the rewards obtained with the efforts and rewards of other people. If the employee perceives a balance between these relationships then he is satisfied. But, if one perceives inequality, it will lead to disillusion, discouragement and demotivation, and can no longer fulfil his responsibilities well (Pânişoară *et al*, 2016).

House (quoted by Popescu in 2013) also highlights the link between leadership and motivation through "the theory of the road to goals". According to this theory, "leaders are efficient because of their positive impact on the motivation of their subordinates and their satisfaction" (Popescu, 2013, p. 331). This theory bears the name of a road to objectives as it shows how leaders can influence employees to work in order to achieve certain goals, aims and also the way they can reach them (House, 1976).

"The Road to Goals Theory", therefore, suggests the leader's style can be motivational if it is adopted according to the personal characteristics of the employees and the environmental specifications with which the subordinates must come into contact. For example, a personal feature is the employee's view of their own abilities. The more employees think they are more capable of performing their own tasks, the less likely they are to be motivated by a leader's style of instruction, giving specific tasks and guidelines to employees (Popescu, 2013).

Moreover, according to this theory, individuals who feel that rewards are in direct connection with their efforts prefer a participatory style in which the leader consults and uses employee suggestions before making a decision. In contrast, employees who consider that rewards are not closely related to their work efficiency are more satisfied with a directive style. So, according to the "The Road to Goals Theory ", the leader's style can be motivational and can help employees adapt to the environment in which they work (Popescu, 2013).

In addition to the adopted style (Sudha *et al*, 2016), a leader can also use other employee motivation methods. To identify these methods, it is imperative to identify the types of motivation that exist. Deac *et al* (2012) describe the following types of motivation: intrinsic, extrinsic; positive, negative.

Intrinsic motivation is "the process of engaging the person in a sustained effort, because of the feeling of accomplishment, fulfillment, which one feels after fulfilling his tasks" (Deac *et al*, 2012, p. 343). Thus, the work no longer represents for the employee only a means of gaining certain advantages, but rather it is regarded as an end in itself, and it even represents a necessity that evolves as it is satisfied. Examples of such needs may be: "responsibility, autonomy, possibilities of using and developing skills and abilities, interesting and exciting work, opportunities for advancement, etc." (Herzberg, quoted by Armstrong, 2003, pp. 140-141). The intrinsic motivation is what causes a person to do a certain thing. This stems from the content itself. Activity is done with great pleasure; it is an end in itself and not a means of getting benefits (Aniței, 2010, pp. 78-85).

Extrinsic motivation has external motivating factors and involves undertaking certain actions to avoid punishment or receive rewards. An activity is not fulfilled for your own satisfaction but to receive something in return.

Cognitive motivation exerts an influence on the individual through cognitive processes (thinking, perception, memory, imagination). It stems from the need for knowledge, in exploratory activities (Sîrbu, 2015).

The affective motivation is determined by the individual's need to relate to others, to belong to a group. This type of motivation implies the need for social respect, cooperation, reconciliation, empathy (Aniței, 2010, p. 56). An example of such motivation may be the acceptance of certain tasks or functions by an employee only in order not to be perceived as an incapable person by his colleagues and to obtain recognition.

The positive motivation is produced by certain material or psychic recompense stimuli (rewards, praise, etc.). This is for the benefit of both the individual and society. Therefore, a positive reason is when it has positive effects on the person and at the same time it does not have negative effects on the people around or on society.

The negative motivation arises from the use of aversive stimuli such as punishment, blame, threats. The effect is inhibiting, avoiding, abstaining, and refusing unwanted behaviors. This type of motivation is mainly used in the educational process. But it has fewer positive effects than the positive motivation that produces positive affective states.

3. Research methodology

In order to highlight the importance of leadership in motivating employees, the authors conducted an exploratory research using the questionnaire as a tool. The main purpose of the research was to identify the importance of leadership in motivating employees. The secondary objectives of this research were to identify the importance of employee motivation, to identify the predominant types of motivation, and to identify the leader's role in motivating employees.

In this respect, a questionnaire comprising 12 questions was designed and applied offline to a sample of 100 people. The respondents belong to different companies from the milling and bakery industry in Romania. Two out of the 100 completed questionnaires were invalidated. As a result, 98 valid questionnaires were obtained. The structure of the questionnaire comprised 3 identifying questions, regarding to the level of studies, gender and the length of employment. The persons selected to answer the questionnaire were from different departments in executive positions. 64 out of the 98 respondents were university graduates, with a difference of 34 persons with secondary education. 45% of the respondents (44 persons) were men and 55% of them (54 persons) were women.

4. Findings

The first question of the questionnaire was used to determine the importance given by the employees to the motivation as a factor influencing their activity at the workplace. Of the 98 respondents, 14 said that it is somehow important, 58 - it is important and 26 - it is very important.

Figure no. 1. The centralizing axis regarding the importance given by employees to motivation as a factor influencing their efficiency

| 1	2	3	4 4.13	5
very little important	little important	a little important	important X	very important
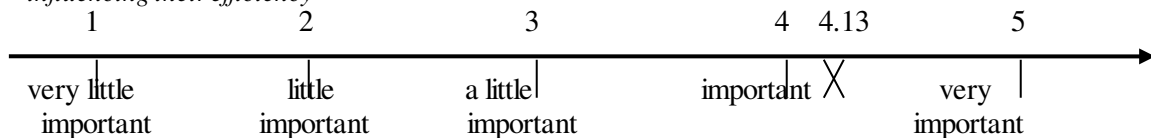
Source: (authors' contribution)

Thus, it can be noticed that 59% of the respondents consider motivation as an important factor that influence their work, the average of responses being 4.13.

The second question was formulated to determine whether the respondents are satisfied with the way they are valued at work. Thus, 31 employees replied they were motivated to a small extent, 11 to some extent, 36 to a large extent and 20 to a very large extent. The average answer given by respondents to this question is 3.47, which shows they are appreciated, but only to a certain extent by the leaders of the companies they work for.

Figure no. 2. Types of motivation used by leaders of different companies and the extent to which they are used by them
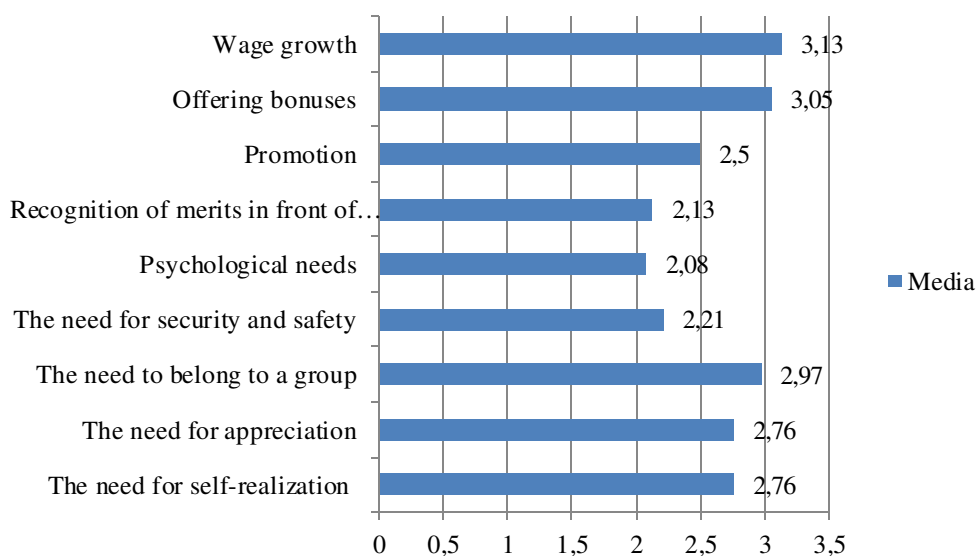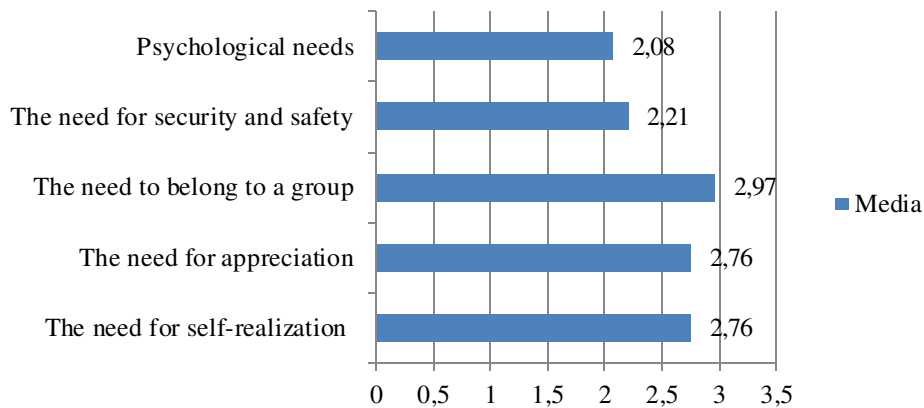

Source: (authors' contribution)

1= very little; 2= little; 3= a little; 4= much; 5= very much

As can be seen, in the organizations, on average, the various types of motivation listed are found to some extent. Wage growth is the most common form of motivation used by the leader, when the appointment of the employee of the month is only to a small extent. Negative motivation, and more precisely job loss, is also found in organizations to a certain extent. As a completion to question 3, respondents also stated the following types of motivation are used: commissions, threats, free days and a pleasant work environment.

Figure no. 3. The Influence of Employee Needs on Workplace Efficiency

Source: (authors' contribution)
1=very little; 2=little; 3=a little 4=much; 5=very much

In order to motivate employees by meeting their needs, the leader must therefore first take into account the need for achievement and then the appreciation and security needs. The need for self-realization, having the average of 4.16, shows that employees consider this need to have an impact on workplace efficiency to a large extent. The need for belonging to the group is the need with the least influence on the efficiency of respondents, considering they influence to a certain extent.

Question 7 was formulated to determine the extent to which leaders from different companies acting within the milling and bakery industry are trying to motivate employees by meeting their needs. So, centralization resulted in an average of 2.73, which shows that to some extent leaders have tried to identify the needs of employees.

Question 8 sought to identify the main motivational forms desired by employees. Thus, promotion is the main form of motivation for 49 respondents. They provided this answer because in this way they get alongside a higher salary and a better status. The second form of motivation preferred by respondents is wage growth. Obviously, any employee wants a higher salary, regardless of the work they have done. Also, getting bonuses is considered a motivation factor, but only by 8 respondents.

In question 9, employees were asked how satisfied they are with the motivation of the leader, and the centralization of answers resulted in an average of 3.10, which means that they are somehow motivated. If leaders wanted to meet the needs of their employees, then, they would raise the average of this question as well because the employees would have been much more satisfied at the time.

5. Conclusions

Leadership and motivation influence each other: people who are highly motivated have a very motivating leadership and vice versa. It can be said that motivation is an essential factor in achieving the company's objectives. Furthermore, very satisfied and motivated people contribute to the survival and growth of a company, especially in this dynamic environment which is quite uncertain. This is due to the influence that leadership has on the performance of employees involved in achieving the company's goals. It is recommended that leadership be supportive and the leader interested in the welfare of employees and their needs. It should also be open, friendly, in

order to create a climate that is conducive to teamwork, while treating his employees as equal (Buble *et al*, 2014).

The paper shows that successful organizations are those in which leaders know how to motivate the workforce. Effective leaders are those who manage to motivate their employees. They have the power to increase the motivation of their employees or followers through the way they treat them but at the same time they can neutralize or worsen their motivational force.

Leadership models start from the premise that a person can motivate another person to act in a certain direction. Leaders can motivate followers according to their traits, leadership style, the way they respond to the environment and the needs of their followers. Expectation can influence employees' motivation. Thus, if people are perceived as responsible and motivated, they will act in this way. Leaders need to trust their members.

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