

## **Human Resources Motivation – Component of the Labor Relations and Human Behavior Development**

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### **Abstract**

*In human resources management the influence of the motivation theory on management practice is absolutely vital as human resources are the most important category of assets used by an organization, but paradoxically they are the only asset that can act against the organization's goals. Thus, only through an effort of collaboration and motivation, employees find in their work the exterior outcome of their latent energy and creativity. In the organizational context, performance refers to the execution of the work activity. The level and quality of an employee's performance are determined by the employee's ability to perform the assigned work and the employee's motivation to perform it. There is an interconditioning between motivation and performance. The objective of this article is to synthesize the research outcome on human resources motivation as a component of labor relations and human behavior development.*

**Key words:** human resources, motivation, management performances

**J.E.L. classification:** M12

### **1. Introduction**

To better emphasize the basic characteristics of the human resources motivation it is necessary to define and outline as clearly as possible its place and content within the human resources management, and from this standpoint, specialty literature approaches numerous different opinions. Regardless of the diversity of opinions, the vast majority of experts in the field believe that human resources management, like any other scientific field, is the result of specialized research and falls under the already known trajectory of a relatively rapid evolution and diversification in many areas of activity.

Thus, depending on the goal pursued, research undertaken and issues addressed, the general management was divided into a plethora of specialized fields, among which the human resources management, an area which has, over time, experienced significant changes.

The system of individual needs, interests and attitudes determines their degree of motivation, which in turn influences the individual and organizational performances. Theories on motivating employees actually refer to how managers treat them. In specialty literature, there is no pattern for staff stimulation, motivation theories are diverse, which has led us to synthesize the existing classifications according to several criteria.

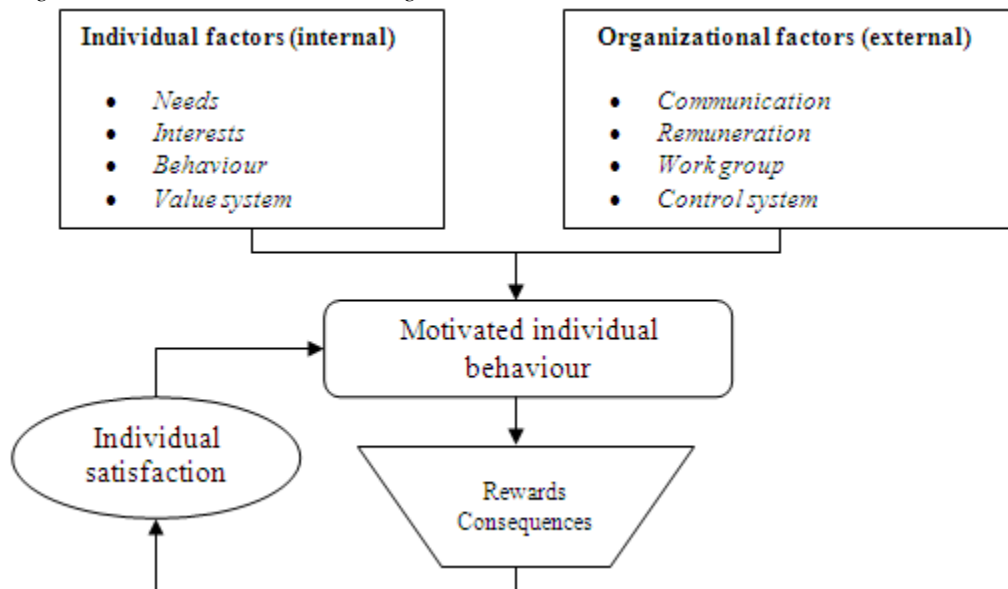
### **2. Literature review**

There are many definitions for the term "motivation" in specialty literature. Although there is no universal definition, most of them emphasize that motivation is a set of forces that incite the individual to engage in a certain demeanor (Prodan, 2008,16). The motivation in the work field is defined by D. Currie (2009, 23) as "the individual's willingness to channel work efforts towards achieving organizational goals, while meeting individual needs." The individual alone is able to motivate himself because all motivational processes are coordinated within the human being, and the manager is in the position to identify and show in what context achieving the company's

objectives also ensures meeting the employees' personal needs. Motivation is a concept that relates to both internal or individual factors and external or organizational factors, encouraging the individual to adopt a particular behavior. The individual's mental and physical balance, caused by the satisfaction of the needs, is fragile and fleeting, in the sense that a new need arises as soon as another has been satisfied thus provoking a new instability that stimulates the individual again.

A general motivation diagram is illustrated in Figure 1. According to this diagram, the level of motivated behavior and human adaptability to different situations are determined by the two categories of interacting energizing factors.

Figure no.1 General Motivation Diagram



Source: (Prodan, A., 2006, 16)

Managers are predominantly preoccupied by motivation in their work, all the more so as employees seek recognition and engagement in meeting needs without the authority and external control have the previous effect. The finality of an action naturally comes to fruition in a material or moral satisfaction, depending on the purpose in question. In the case of the employee, when the effectiveness of the individual's participation in the group's activities is reduced and arisen satisfaction does not exist, there is a state of dissatisfaction that affects people and the organization as a whole, causing the phenomenon of frustration.

The research conducted by a group of specialists within governmental organizations in the United States of America led to designing an assessment model for a six-phase employee motivation system, which has provided a set of new methods for human resources performance review (Edwards, 2017, 87).

Authors view these methods as applicable to any type of organization, in the context of the new challenges of human resources management regarding the evolution of their strategic role within the organization. The novelty of the proposed assessment program entailed determining a systematic methodology that established an appropriate successful metric intended for motivating human resources as well as determining how this program accepts improvements or outsourcing in order to successfully fulfill the criteria for which it was designed.

### 3. Analysis of the main motivation theories and their implications in the human resources performance growth

Of all the motivation theories, the study of *content* and *process theories* has been of particular importance among the theorists of last century. Advocates of content theories emphasized the importance of environmental and job intrinsic factors, stating that employees are more or less motivated by the presence or absence of the factors desired. The adepts of process theories have

argued that people choose to behave in certain ways because they expect to achieve their desired results. In the opinion of most specialists, human resources managers and practitioners have a full understanding of the factors that motivate people to work. Motivation leads to performance, and the degree to which a well-trained and qualified individual will perform a task is determined by the extent to which he feels motivated to do so.

The main motivation theories presented in Table 1 start from the existence of individual requirements that the organization seeks to satisfy or neutralize if they oppose its objectives.

Table no.1 Main motivational theories

| <b>Theory Category</b>   | <b>Theory name</b>                           | <b>Representatives</b> | <b>Characteristics and fundamental principles</b>  |
|--|--|------------------------|--|
| <b>Preliminary Theories</b>  | Classical school                             | F. Taylor              | Employees are stimulated by various categories of financial or economic rewards  |
|  | Human resources school                       | Elton Mayo             | Noteworthy social elements associated with work, rendering employees the sense of their importance   |
| <b>Content Theories - Refer to the factors initiating motivated behavior</b> | The hierarchy of needs theory                | A. Maslow              | People constantly seek to meet certain needs, which manifest in a certain order of their importance  |
|  | The two-factor theory                        | F.W. Herzberg          | Employees are influenced by two types of factors, some causing dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) and others satisfaction (motivation factors)                            |
|  | ERG Theory - Existence, Relationship, Growth | C. Alderfer            | Employees work under the impetus of requirements related to respect, affiliation and growth  |
|  | Theory X and Theory Y                        | McGregor               | The theory comprises two fundamental models based on different assumptions about employees and practices of implementing managerial styles                               |
|  | Need theory                                  | D. McClelland          | The organization provides employees opportunities to meet at least three needs: the needs for power, achievement and affiliation   |
| <b>Process Theories - Address the factors that motivate the behavior</b>     | The VIE expectancy theory                    | V. Vroom               | People choose their behavior depending on the extent to which they value the expected outcome; the theory uses the terms <i>valence, instrumentality, and expectancy</i> |
|  | The expectancy theory                        | L. Porter, E. Lawler   | Develops Vroom's ideas stating that performance is that that produces satisfaction and emphasizes the expected results   |
|  | Goal-setting theory                          | E. Locke               | Highlights individual's ability to choose the goals they want to achieve and which strongly influence behaviors  |
|  | The equity theory                            | S. Adams               | Employees compare themselves with others in terms of efforts and outcomes to ensure that they are treated fairly and equitably   |
| <b>Reinforcement theories</b>  | Operant conditioning theory                  | B.F. Skinner           | The theory deals with the factors that lead to the repetition of a certain behavior; positive or negative reinforcement conditions the behavior                          |

Source: (Adapted after Rosca, et al, 2015, 399) and (Currie, D., 2016, 235)

The social exigencies related to wage as a motivating factor, represented by satisfaction generating, employees motivating, equity policies implementing or directing labor force to some priority areas, with strong effects on individual and organizational performance, are currently the subject of major concern for many case studies. Criticisms of individual motivation theories for being focused only on one side of the motivation influence have led to the idea that some comparisons and combinations of the concepts involved are achievable through considering several theories. For example, Herzberg's environmental factors fully satisfy the needs from the inferior levels of Maslow's theory or Alderfer's relationship and existence ones, but only partially satisfy McClelland's theory of affiliation.

At the same time, Herzberg's motivating factors meet the needs of the higher levels of the other three theories. The motivation shift from a more simplistic view to a more refined, well-drafted theory is manifested by the abandonment of content theories that claimed universal applicability. In this respect, the correspondence of the main individual motivation theories is important, according to the depiction in figure 2.

Figure no. 2 Correspondence of needs in individual motivation theories

|                | HIERARCHY OF NEEDS THEORY Maslow           | TWO-FACTOR THEORY Herzberg | ERG THEORY Alderfer | NEED THEORY McClelland                   |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Superior needs | Self- accomplishment needs                 | Motivators                 | Growth              | Needs of accomplishment, Needs for power |
|                | Need for respect                           |                            |                     |  |
| Basic needs    | Social needs to affiliation and acceptance | Environmental Factors      | Relationship        | Needs of affiliation                     |
|                | Needs for safety and protection            |                            |                     |  |
|                | Physiological needs                        |                            | Existence           |  |

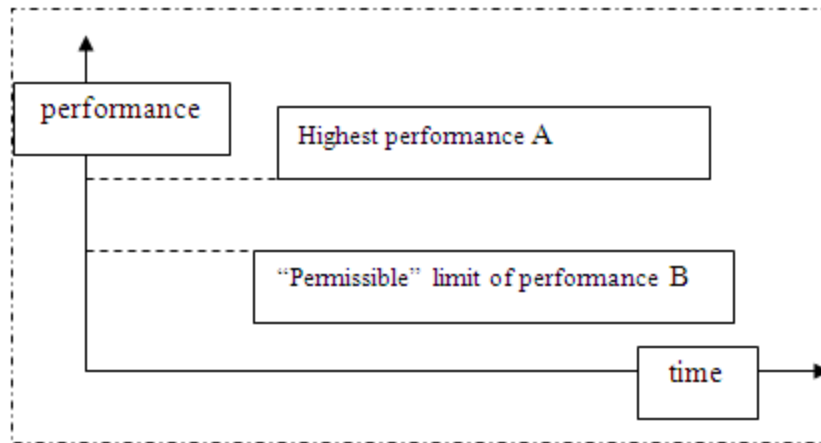
Source: Adapted after Nica, 2010, 173

As opposed to the approaches of motivation content theories, a new vision is being developed today in the management practice according to which there is no motivator per se, only concepts on the basis of which a certain social issue becomes motivating or not. In agreement with a reputable specialist in human resources management, we believe that each time employees are motivation-deprived the problem is particularly identified in one of the following five areas: inefficient selection, lack of communication within the organization, ambiguous objectives, system performance assessment or defective organizational management (Robbins, 2008, 98). Productivity, efficiency, performance are labor desiderata. How they are derived from the influence of human factor, how high performance in an organization is and which the permissible limit is for employees are issues that most managers seek to clarify.

To outline possible responses to these issues, we suggest taking into account the performance monitoring system shown in Figure 3.

Based on this model, the *upper limit* of performance is conditioned by the ability of each individual to fulfill workload, but also by the technical system provided by the organization; the *lower limit* is the lowest level of performance that the leadership of an organizations is willing to accept. The place occupied by an employee between the two limits of performance depends on his motivation and willingness to work better.

Figure no.3 Employees performance monitoring model



Source: Author's contribution

According to the model in figure 3, an employee in position A proves a higher motivation, whereas another, in position B, is demotivated. The aim of positive influence on motivation is to move most employees to position A and to this end, working conditions, job satisfaction, promotion perspectives, performance evaluation system are directly acted upon via additional use of valuation tools of the work done, the delegation and encouragement of the employee's initiative at the workplace.

#### 4. Wage policy - human resources motivating factor

In management practice, salary management has become a limited concept in terms of the issues addressed and was gradually replaced by the *rewards management* which, according to a group of authors, represents the process of developing and implementing strategies, policies and rewards systems allowing organizations to accomplish their goals by employing, maintaining and motivating human resources (Lefter, 2008,89). Employees' appropriate motivation as to contribute to the increase in the organization's competitiveness is achieved through their appropriate rewarding based on their specific strategy and policies and their own reward system.

In most organizations, the rewards system includes, in addition to work, other items (Manolescu, 2013, 123) that Fisher, Schoenfeld and Shaw divided into:

- Direct rewards, represented by the basic salary, merit pay, incentive system and deferred payment.
- Indirect rewards, represented by protection programs, paid non-worked time, services and other rewards.

Component of the reward system, the wage policy influences the organization's performance through how it is developed and used by managers. An adequate wage policy becomes a motivating factor for human resources when, deemed as reward, is desired and credited to the employee who improves his work performance and at the same time requires a proportional ratio between the employee's additional effort and performance improvement.

Defining the wage policy, V. Petrovici (2007, 165) considers that this constitutes "an association of action decisions aimed at achieving the organizational objectives in the field of wages and also the means to achieve them." According to this definition, through the salary policy used, the organization's management seeks to develop a payroll system targeting work performance. This means that it is intended to increase the incentive nature of salary, to support competitiveness and performance through its level and evolution, which implies a direct correlation between the results of the work and its payment. The fundamental element of wage policy is salary, which represents the remuneration for the work done and due to an employee based on a labor contract. Salary separates work from other human activities by the fact that it helps an individual become materially independent and the gain earned will determine the standard of living for himself and also his dependents. This highlights the motivational nature of the salary in regard to

work performance increase and the degree of belonging to a certain social group. If there are no prospects for career development and salary increase, the employee will look for another job able to fulfill his material and professional aspirations.

The wage policy development is a complex activity requiring consideration of all the salary components, the functions it performs, the correlations with various economic and social variables, as well as their implications on the interests of the parties interested in the organization's activity, divergent in most cases.

Thus, for the *capital owner*, pay is often the most important element of production costs and its minimization becomes an essential requirement to maintain the competitiveness, competitive capacity and viability of the market firm.

For the employee, as a *labor force owner*, salary represents income, the main means of his and his family's existence, and his reaction is to try to upsurge salary. Therefore, it is imperative that wage policy neglect not employees' fundamental needs and goals, as salary is a means to meet their social and personal needs.

The third part of the labor relations, the *public authority* conceives salary both economically and socially, from the perspective of the labor market, the existing institutions and the economic and social equilibrium that it generates. Therefore, the contradictions generated by the divergent interests of the three parties, which are also the source of the malfunctions within the organizations, require the development of wage policies that determine the adherence of the employees to the organization and allow the motivation for an increased contribution to the long-term global performance .

In G.A. Cole's opinion (2006, 45), an organization's wage policy targets three main purposes:

- Attracting a sufficient number of suitable employees.
- Keeping employees happy.
- Rewarding employees for their effort, loyalty and achievement.

Under these circumstances, the majority of the private sector organizations, as well as a significant part of the public sector, spend a great deal of time and effort on designing adequate remuneration systems to cope with pressures from trade unions that negotiate a higher labor cost, competing firms that attract better qualified human resources and the state, which requires minimum working conditions for all employers. The generalization of the salary as a form of earning an income has occurred in the context of the modern capitalist organization. Salary is an economic, social, but also a legal category.

With respect to salary, various theories have been developed over time from the economic standpoint, where there are no predetermined and categorical rules for establishing the distribution of income between salaries and profits. As a result, the negotiation between the social partners that ultimately determine the division of income into wages and profits is critical.

From a social point of view, salary has nutrition character, because it is for most employees the essential income through its periodicity and regularity. By making the workforce available to others, the person engages herself and must instead receive the necessary means to lead a dignified life.

From a legal point of view, the labor fulfillment and its remuneration are the main obligations resulting for the employee and respectively for the employer based on the individual labor contract signing or the existence of the service relationship. The legal obligation to work, , possibly, determined or determinable and personal, is also characterized by the fact that it has a patrimony character and can be economically assessed. In our country, the concept of salary is legally prevalent, and its components arise according to legal norms. In this respect, we highlight the position according to which, in the Romanian budgetary system, the emphasis is set on the earnings stability and wage equal distribution in compliance with strict rules, and the confirmation is rendered by the existing salary method in the public railway companies.

We believe that, at a macroeconomic level, wage policy is conceived as a component of the overall economic strategy along with the employment, fiscal and monetary policy; at a microeconomic policy, it is an intrinsic part of the organization's strategy, involving internal and external equity. Internal equity starts from a balance that the organization has to promote between the employee's performance and the reward offered. In order to achieve this balance some authors considered necessary to quantify a series of factors, namely: experience, education, supervision

degree, activities complexity, physical and mental capacities, working conditions (Panisoara, 2005, 136). External equity refers to stabilizing the salary level within an organization with the salary level existing on the labor market for a similar position.

From the perspective of a staff department within an organization, salaries are seen as a balance between supply and demand, setting competitive rhythms and rewarding systems for valuable activities. Each understanding on wages has an effect on the production process and involves the use of a certain human resources motivation system.

## 5. Conclusions

The role of the human factor increases as consumers' demands for quality of services and participation in the production activity of some diverse segments of the population increase. These actions of population's direct involvement educates the consumer more easily, increases the level of accepting different services and, implicitly, his satisfaction. The quality of social relations reflects the place occupied by the employees in the company, and the assessment of the level of these relationships must be based on the staff's motivation and participation and behavioral style of managers organised hierarchically, both in the company's central structure and the regional branches.

The activity efficiency of an economic organization largely depends on how its leadership succeeds in maintaining a permanent social dialogue within it as a constructive way to integrate employees' personal goals into the organization's overall objectives. Employees' permanent participation in the social dialogue is beneficial for the organization, as it responds to specific, high-interest objectives and targets the achievement of the economic and social requirements. Employees' participation is justified and *economically* supported, as it contributes to finding solutions for production and productivity increase, costs cut, avoiding damage or losses emerging from social conflicts. This economic coordinate resulted from employees' participation in the social dialogue is complemented by the organization's *social* dimension by meeting the external clients' demands as well as by solving its own staff's emergent demands.

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