

## **EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE**

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### **Abstract**

This paper is aimed to encourage managers in their intents to improve performance within organizational set up through employee motivation. This is a qualitative study whose evaluation was performed towards previous studies review on the concept of motivation as the researcher suggests it might be the corner stone in building organizational performance. The most valuable part of the review is the implication of motivation theories which include Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory and McClelland Acquired Needs Theory that can be useful to managers in their day to day managerial decision making in order to foster the overall organizational performance. The researcher came to a conclusion that motivation can increase expected organizational performance if managers prioritize and satisfy employees' needs and further proposed some recommendations for them.

**KEYWORDS: Motivation, Motivation theories, Organizational Performance**

## INTRODUCTION

People are an organization's most valuable assets, but again, they also represent the most difficult resource for organizations to manage. Unlike physical assets, people have their own individual needs which must be met and habits which must be managed if they are to contribute to organizational growth and development. There are individuals who bring their own perspectives, values and attributes to organizational life, and when managed effectively can bring considerable benefits to organizations (Mullins, 2005).

A company may have good manager, a good vision and a good goal; however, if it neglects its employees, that company is practically in turmoil. Unsatisfied employees produce unsatisfactory results, therefore, it is very vital for top management to take care of their employees to ensure that they are satisfied in their jobs; when they are satisfied; they strive for the company's goals and aim (Latham, 1994; Egan, 1998). Hence, the success of any business or organization as a matter of fact depends largely on the motivation of the employees. Motivation is the key to creating an enabling environment where optimal performance is possible (Nduro, 2012).

The greatest thing about motivation is that it is individualized as such its programs are tailored to suit the needs and wants of employees. Motivation does not only encourage productive performance but also show employees how much the company cares. Perhaps the most vital impact of employee motivation is that of increased productivity or performance. This according to literature on the subject is the central aim of adopting employee motivational programs thus, if you can increase employee motivation, productivity inevitably will follow suit (Ryan, 2011).

Employee motivation promotes workplace harmony and increased employee performance. It is the key to long term benefits for the company. Motivated employees means staff retention and company loyalty, which in the short run will give birth to growth and development of business (Al Jishi, 2009). Thus, according to the researcher, no manager can neglect this organizational performance recipe and attain his/her expected overall organizational performance.

### Statement of the Problem

The success or failure of any business as a matter of fact depends largely on its employees; thus human resources are very essential to the organization as they are the key to prosperity, productivity and performance. How employees are perceived, treated and how they feel about themselves and ultimately their output directly or indirectly has an impact on their performance and as result performance of the organization. Unmotivated employees under no circumstance will churn out decreased performance (Nduro, 2012).

The challenge for managers today is to keep the staff motivated and performing well in the workplace (Joseph, 2015). This means giving close attention to how individuals can best be motivated through means such as incentives, rewards, leadership etc. and the organization context within which they carry out the work (Armstrong, 2006). According to Mullins (2005), a major international study by Proud Foot Consulting revealed that, the most

important reason for productivity loss was poor working morale. This includes absence of positive team spirit, low motivation, and poor sense of belonging, people feeling undervalued and poorly rewarded what is a real fact to be underlined by the researcher.

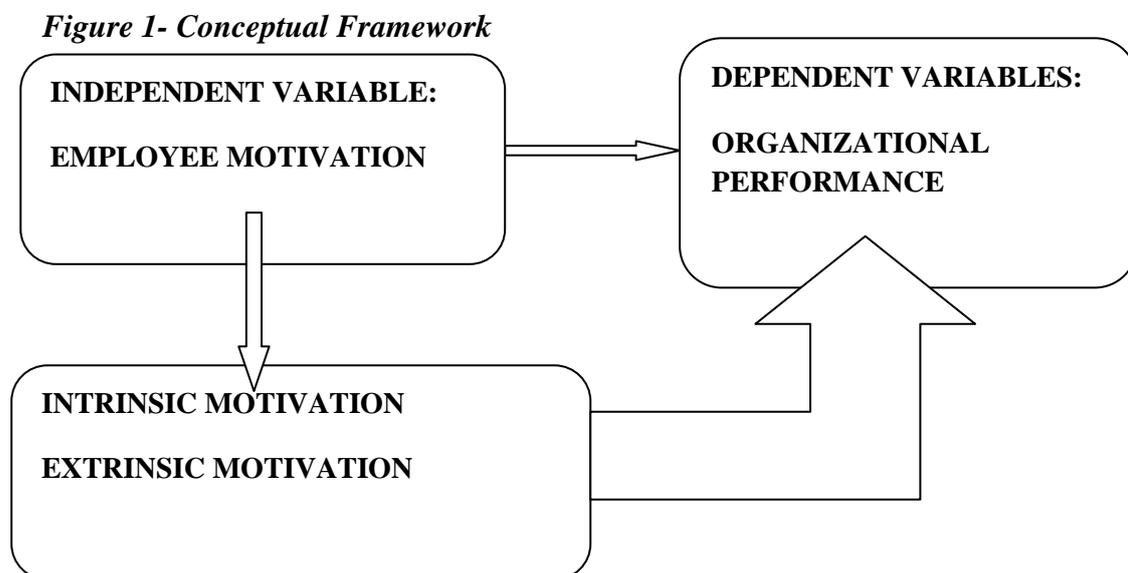
In addition, with the researcher work experience, there exist managers who do not care if one or many of his/her employees reveal signals of lack of motivation as a barrier to their commitment towards achieving organizational goals. As result, this is translated into rapid increase in absenteeism where an employee can be absent during one or two weeks without being asked what is going on; leading to their turnover intentions, and finally turnover. Those managers ignore that the cited issues are the core root of poor employees' performance and hence poor organizational performance. Based on the cited observation, the study aims at finding out the constructive ways for managers to strengthen employees' motivation towards organizational performance as solution to such a problem.

### **Rationale of the Research Review**

The reason behind this research review is to clarify how employee motivation plays a major role in influencing organizational performance. It further explains that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation has influence on organizational performance. Therefore, strategic interventions can be put in place by managers to ensure that skilled and talent employees are motivated through adequate strategic motivation system which in turn will enhance organizational performance.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework expresses the reason to conduct this study. Figure 1 shows the approach followed to conduct this study. It comprises two variables, dependent variable in the right side which is organizational performance while in the left side there is independent variable which is employee motivation with its sub-variables intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.



**Source: Researcher' Own Construct (August, 2018)**

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The review of related literature describes the key concepts and theories extracted from different books, journals, other research reviews, and electronic source that provide clear understanding of the researcher's topic. It explains in details the key concepts of this paper namely motivation, motivation theories and organizational performance.

### Motivation

Motivation refers to the forces within or beyond a person that arouse and sustain their commitment to a course of action (Boddy, 2005). According to Robbins and Decenzo (2008), motivation is the willingness to exert high levels of effort to reach organizational goals, conditioned by the efforts and ability to satisfy. They further asserted that motivation is a function of three key elements: *effort, organizational goals and needs*. As a concept, motivation was of much interest to psychologists and behavioral scientists in the past years. At present, motivation is being widely practiced by all organizations as they now see it as important in their work settings (Nduro, 2012).

### Features of motivation

McCoy (2012) in her conference paper presentation outlined the following features of motivation. She charged that motivation is an act of management; a continuous process. It can be positive or negative; goal oriented and complex in nature; an art and not science; a system or organizational oriented; and finally, it is different from job satisfaction.

### Sources of Motivation

Hitt (2004) contributing to motivation was of the opinion that there are basically three categories of variables that determine motivation at the work settings:

***Characteristics of the individual***- the first category, are the source of internal or push forces of motivation. This he claims is what the employee brings to the work setting. Defending his point further asserts that three variables also contribute to an individual's push forces: the persons (1) Need- such as security, self esteem, achievement, or power. (2) Attitudes- towards job, a supervisor, or organization and (3) Goals- such as task completion, accomplishment of a certain level of performance, and carrier advancement.

***Characteristics of the job***- the second category according to him, relates to the external or pull forces which concentrate in job characteristics of the person (what the person does at the workplace). The characteristics he outlined as how much direct feedback he receives, the work load, the variety and scope of tasks and degree of control the person has in terms of how he or she works.

***Characteristics of the work situation***- the third category he identified, and from his submission it clearly shows that it relates to the work situation of the person, talking about what actually happens to the person. A further reading by the cited researcher, revealed that this category has two sets of variables: the immediate social environment comprising the person's supervisors, working group members and subordinates; and the various types of

organizational actions such as the firms rewards and compensation practices, the availability of training and development, and the amount of pressure applied to achieve high levels of output.

## **Types of Motivation**

### ***Intrinsic Motivation***

It can arise from the self-generated factors that influence people's behavior. It is not created by external incentives. It can take the form of motivation by the work itself when individuals feel that their work is important, interesting and challenging and provides them with a reasonable degree of autonomy (freedom to act), opportunities to achieve and advance, and scope to use and develop their skills and abilities. Deci and Ryan (1985) suggested that intrinsic motivation is based on the needs to be competent and self-determining (Armstrong, 2009).

Intrinsic motivation can be enhanced by job or role design. According to an early writer on the significance of the motivational impact of job design (Katz, 1964): "The job itself must provide sufficient variety, sufficient complexity, sufficient challenge and sufficient skill to engage the abilities of the worker." In their job characteristics model, Hackman and Oldham (1976) emphasized on the importance of the core job dimensions as motivators, namely skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback (Armstrong, 2009).

One way managers can also stimulate motivation is to give relevant information on the consequences of their actions on others. There is no organization in which people do not usually feel there should be improvement in the way departments communicate, cooperate and collaborate with one another. Information availability brings to bear a powerful pressure where two or more people running together will run fast than when running alone without being aware of the pace of your competitors. This implies that by making information flow subordinates compete with one another (Olajide, 2000).

More often, firms use hedonic goods or services as non cash rewards; items that are associated with pleasure experience rather than more instrumental or functional items (Dhar & Wertenbroch, 2000) when considering whether to exert additional effort in pursuit of a bonus award such as this, the employee must predict what the item offered is worth to them. The hedonic nature of incentives triggers an effective reaction to the incentive that becomes a more salient attribute than the cash value of the incentive. This fact leads people to use their feelings as information when determining the value of the incentive (Hsee, 1996a; Loewenstein, Weber, Hsee, & Welch, 2001; Schwarz & Clore, 1988). Because these feelings are difficult to monetize, cognitive and motivational forces allow for the perceived value of the awards to be inflated (Nduro, 2012).

### ***Extrinsic motivation***

It is related to tangible rewards such as salary and fringe benefits, security, promotion, contract of service, the work environment and conditions of service. These are what need to be done to or for people to motivate them. They are often determined at the organizational

level and may be largely outside the control of the individual managers. Extrinsic motivators can have an immediate and powerful effect but will not necessarily last long (Mullins, 2005; Armstrong, 2003). The intrinsic motivators, which are concerned with the *quality of working life* (a phrase and movement that emerged from this concept), are likely to have a deeper and longer-term effect because they are inherent in individuals and their work and not imposed from outside in such forms as incentive pay (Armstrong, 2009).

Bernard and Stoner (2005) propose the following are incentives for employees: Salary, Wages and Conditions of Service: To use salaries as an effective motivating tool, personnel managers must consider four major components of salary structures. These are the job rate, which relates to the importance the organization attaches to each job; payment, which encourages workers or groups by rewarding them according to their performance; personal or special allowances, associated with factors such as scarcity of particular skills or certain categories of information professionals or librarians, or with long service; and fringe benefits such as holidays with pay, pensions, and so on. It is also important to ensure that the prevailing pay in other library or information establishments is taken into consideration in determining the pay structure of their organization (Nduro, 2012).

Extrinsic motivation occurs when things are done to or for people to motivate them. These include rewards, such as incentives, increased pay, praise, or promotion; and punishments, such as disciplinary action, withholding pay, or criticism (Armstrong, 2009). Even though the thought of a cash bonus may emotionally charge as well, the economic value of money is more easily calculated. This makes cash award less prone to the biases which inflate the perceived utility of a hedonic non monetary reward. When an item is evaluated on its effective value, its predicted utility is also more ambiguous than that of cash. Cognitive dissonance reductions suggests that if an employee is working hard to achieve the awards, then he or she will attempt to convince themselves that the award is worth a great deal to them bringing beliefs in line with their actions (Bem, 1967; Festinger, 1958; Quattrone, 1985).

Akintoye (2000) asserts that money remains the most significant motivational strategy. As far back as 1911, Frederick Taylor and his scientific management associate described money as the most important factor in motivating the industrial workers to achieve greater productivity. Taylor advocated the establishment of incentive wage systems as a means of stimulating workers to higher performance, commitment, and eventually satisfaction. Money possesses significant motivating power in as much as it symbolizes intangible goals like security, power, prestige, and a feeling of accomplishment and success.

### **Motivation Theories**

Psychologist typically grouped motivation theories into two categories namely; the content theories and process theories. The content theories addresses the issue of what needs a person is trying to satisfy and what features of the work environment seem to satisfy those needs. Such theories try to explain motivation by identifying (a) internal factors; those are particular needs and (b) external factors, particular job and work situation and characteristics that are presumed to cause behavior. The process theories of motivation dealt with the way

different variables combined to influence the amount of effort put forth by an employee (Hitt, 2004). Muhammad, Ghafoor, and Naseer (2011) in contributing to this school of thought attempt to explain and describe how people start, sustain and direct behavior aimed at the satisfaction of needs or reduction of inner tension. In this review, only Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Mc Clelland acquired needs theories will be put into consideration.

### **Maslow's Theory (Hierarchy of Needs)**

This theory was propounded by Abraham Maslow. It was based on the assumption that employees are motivated by series of five universal needs, these range of needs he claimed the individual will be motivated to fulfill whichever is most powerful at the time of need (Maslow, 1970). These needs, literature makes us to understand he grouped them into *lower order needs*- which he claimed are dominant until they are at least partially satisfied. From this angle it can be realized that any normal human being would turn his attention to satisfy needs at the next level giving rise to *higher-order needs* which gradually become dominant (Nduro, 2012). To make the theory simple, Maslow ranked these needs in a hierarchical fashion:

**Figure 2- Model of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**



**Source: Maslow, A.H. (1943).**

### ***Physiological Needs***

*Physiological needs* according to Maslow (1970) are the basic needs for survival and deemed it to be the lowest- level needs. These needs included needs such as food, water, shelter, etc. These are the basic necessities a human being needs to survive and as a matter of fact cannot do without it. He was of the strong opinion that even if all the other needs are unsatisfied then physiological needs will dominate. So long as physiological needs are unsatisfied, there exist as a driving or motivating force in a person's life. A hungry person has a felt need and this felt need ignites both (psychological and physical) tension and manifest itself in a manner directed towards reducing the said tension (getting food to eat) thus, people will focus on activities that will help them survive. Once the hunger is satisfied tension is reduced and the need for food ceases to be a motivator.

Managers should therefore provide better staff meals such as break tea and lunch with other life essentials. This will make employees feel valued and perform their daily tasks accordingly. However, some organizations forget that employees are the first to acquire such allowances and benefits to energize them for expected overall organization performance.

They have to put into their mind that a hungry man provides no satisfying results. Unfortunately, they ignore that while motivating managers and leaders alone in the detriment of low level employees who are the main sources of their pride, it is one among factors affecting employees' anger, decreasing their working morale, and raising up their dissatisfaction leading to a decline in organizational performance. This is ridiculous!

### ***Safety Needs***

The next level in the hierarchy was what he termed as *safety needs*- the search for shelter, security, stability, dependency, protection, freedom from (anxiety, fear and chaos), and a need for structure, order, and law. In the work setting, these needs translate into a need for at least a minimal degree of employment security; and the assurance that it is impossible to be dismissed or sacked on irrelevant issues and that appropriate levels of effort and productivity will ensure continued employment (Nduro, 2012). In the light of this, a safe and secured working environment should be provided by management, for instance, employee should be working in a space free from hazards with a satisfying room temperature, and their health care should also highly be considered. Safety needs are not only adequate employees working conditions but also their financial security. Therefore, organizations should pay fair wage to employees in order to ensure their career and well being stability.

### ***Belongingness needs***

According to Hayes (2009), if a person has the first two levels of needs well gratified, the emergence of *social needs* (sense of belongingness and love) becomes the next objective. At this stage in life, a person hunger for the affection of others and would want to be placed in a group or family. Relating this to the work place, as outgoing creatures, humans have a need to belong and this can only be satisfied by an ability to interact with one's colleagues and be able to collaborate effectively to achieve organizational goals.

According to the researcher, human beings naturally need to belong to a specific social group, to love and feel loved. In order to satisfy this human need, managers have to ensure that an environment of collaborative and team spirit is created among them, generating a feeling of acceptance and belonging by organizing mutual parties or trainings including all employees. Organizations also should reserve employees enough time to unite with their families instead of taking their free time on the behalf of the organizations.

### ***Esteem Needs***

Maslow (1970), observed from the research conducted with his patients that humans after gratifying social needs would now crave for what he calls *esteem needs*. Thus, the desire for self- respect, esteem, and the esteem of others takes place. He defined self- respect as the need for a sense of achievement, competence, adequacy and confidence. Digesting his submission carefully, and relating it to the workplace setting, externally, people seek needs like desire for reputation and recognition, prestige, status, fame, glory, dominance attention and appreciation in the eyes of other people.

Managers should imperatively recognize employees' accomplishments, either by rewarding them financially or emotionally. In addition, organizations should also set specific

awards for achieving certain tasks which can not only be financial awards but also non-financial ones like praises in the view of other employees or submitting a performance award certificate to the best performer of the year. Furthermore, organizations should promote employees referring to their achievements and this can not only make employees feel like valuable assets of the organization but also they will feel more appreciated and respected within their workplace.

### ***Self-Actualization Needs***

The highest need in Maslow's hierarchy arguable though *self-actualization* which refers to the desire for self- fulfillment, realization of a potential, continuous self-development and the process of becoming you. Expatiating further, Hitt (2004) added that at this level, individual differences are dominant as the emergence of these needs rest upon some prior satisfaction of the previous four. At this point, people seeking to satisfy this need will actually look for personal relevance and value new responsibilities that may help discover their new talents. For this purpose, the researcher proposes that managers can satisfy this employees' need in allowing them to reveal their full capacity and reach their highest potentials. This can only be done while offering them challenging and meaningful assignments to incite and explore their creativity and innovation which are very relevant to the organization's productivity and hence its performance.

### **McClelland Theory (Acquired Needs)**

According to Nduro (2012), another content theory which also centered on needs was propounded by an American psychologist David McClelland. His theory focuses on learned or acquired needs. He proposed three of these needs to be the underlying principle for this theory; hence the reference of the theory as three needs theory is shown in the following model:

***Figure 3- Model of Acquired Needs Theory***



**Source: (Nduro, 2012)**

According to McClelland (1961), the three learned needs theory in the above model is explained as follows:

**(a) Need of achievement (nAch)**

The concept of need for achievement (nAch) was formulated in the 1950s (McClelland, Clark, Roby, & Atkinson 1958). McClelland and his colleagues argued that high-nAch people are more likely than low-nAch people to engage in energetic and innovative activities that require planning for the future and entail an individual's responsibility for task outcomes. McClelland (1961) argued that high-nAch people should also prefer tasks that involve skill and effort.

*The n-ach person is achievement motivated and seeks achievement, attainment of realistic but challenging goals, and advancement in the job. There is a strong need for feedback as to achievement and progress. People with a high need for achievement seek to excel and thus tend to avoid both low-risk and high-risk situations. Achievers avoid low-risk situations because the easily attained success is not a genuine achievement. In high-risk projects, achievers see the outcome as one of chance rather than one's own effort. High n-ach individuals prefer work that has a moderate probability of success, ideally a 50% chance. They prefer either to work alone or with other high achievers.*

The researcher highlights that the high achievers should be given challenging projects requiring hard work with attainable objectives. Moreover, she asserts that managers have to make sure those projects and objectives are preset before so that those nAch perform their works accordingly. They should be provided frequent feedback necessary to follow up their tasks progress and accomplishment. For instance, financial and non-financial rewards can be supportive and chosen in terms of required feedback.

**(b) Need of affiliation (nAff)**

*The n-affil person is affiliation motivated. He/she has a need for friendly relationships and is motivated towards interaction with other people. They need harmonious relationships with other people and need to feel accepted by other people. The affiliation driver produces motivation and need to be liked and held in popular regard. These people are team players. They tend to conform to the norms of their work group. High nAff individuals prefer work that provides significant personal interaction. They perform well in customer service and client interaction situations.*

According to the researcher, employees with a high affiliation need (nAff) perform better in a cooperative and collaborative environment than in single person. In order to motivate them, she proposes that managers are required to build nAff's capacity by allocating them in activities and positions enabling them to interact directly with other employees or customers. In addition, team works can be prepared to them in order to generate expected organizational outcome.

**(c) Need of power (nPow).**

*The n-Pow person is authority motivated. This driver produces a need to be influential, effective and to make an impact. There is a strong need to lead and for their ideas to prevail. There is also motivation and need towards increasing personal status and prestige. A person's need for power can be one of two types - personal and institutional. Those who*

need personal power want to direct others, and this need often is perceived as undesirable. Persons who need institutional power (also known as social power) want to organize the efforts of others to further reach the goals of the organization. Managers with a high need for institutional power tend to be more effective than those with a high need for personal power.

In order to motivate a person's need for power (nPow), the researcher suggests that management should provide all power seekers the opportunity to manage others. For this reason, the delegation of power by top managers and participation in decision making for those nPow employees are highly recommended.

Finally, McClelland (1961) was of the view that, rather than being arranged in a hierarchy, individual possess each possibility of conflicting needs, which motivate their behavior when activated. He further opines that, the presence of these motives or drives in an individual indicates a predisposition to behave in certain ways. Therefore, from a manager's perspective, recognizing which need is dominant in any particular individual affects the way in which that person can be motivated.

### **Organizational performance**

For organization, performance is one of the ways to measure the extent of its effectiveness. The need for the ability to set goals and objectives to achieve its performance and how to improve the overall organizational performance is undoubtedly the most important organizational goals and objectives. Definition and measurement of performance is a challenge for researchers because organizations have many, frequently conflicting, goals (Chow *et al.*, 1994).

Sarah and Tricia (2005) indicated that performance is often used to measure the overall status of the organization and its related policies. Organizational performance can be measured by both financial and non-financial performance (Yang *et al.*, 2009). Venkatraman and Ramanujam (1986) considered three factors to corporate performance measurement, namely, financial performance (i.e. return on investment, earnings per share, etc.), operational performance (i.e. market share, product quality, etc.) and organizational effectiveness (i.e. employee's morale, work atmosphere, etc.).

The dimension of employees is reflected in one form or another in all organizational diagnostic models, an aspect that reveals its importance to the success of an organization. Often management decisions may generate feelings of anger, frustration, grievance, and distrust, among employees, that may contribute to a potentially detrimental effect on the general organizational performance (Vasconcelos, 2011).

According to Lawler (2005), the relationship between organizations and employees should not only focus on the task itself. Organizations should take initiative to develop an effective motivation system to increase employees' motivation towards their work. This in turn will help to improve the efficiency and quality of work, enabling organizations to meet their performance outcomes.

Urbanski (1986) used salary increment as a motivation tool and found that it effectively motivates employees and increase organizational performance. The flexibility in salary increment was also found to have a positive effect. Bhatti *et al.* (2011) studied the effect of motivation on individuals and how it contributes towards organizational performance with the conclusion that organizations should define clear strategy to link performance with rewards. Aguinis *et al.* (2013) established that monetary incentives were important factors of employee motivation and achievement which contributes significantly to organizational level performance returns.

### **Conclusion**

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs and David McClelland acquired needs theories still have crucial values in today's organizations. If any organization seeks to attain its financial or non-financial performance and attempt to ignore practical application of the hierarchy of needs theory and acquired needs theory, this will affect negatively the performance of employees decreasing their morale and commitment to work which in turn will decline the overall organizational performance. Hence, to achieve organizational performance, employee motivation through application of both the theories is paramount. Overall, no employee motivation no organizational performance. As employees are like cornerstones for sustainable organizational performance, managers and leaders are required to prioritize more than ever before their needs of all levels and provide appropriate motivations accordingly.

### **Recommendations for Managers**

The following are recommendations for organizations' managers:

- Setting employee motivation policies in which reward systems are built on Maslow's hierarchy of needs and McClelland acquired needs and where employees should participate in elaboration of those policies. In these policies, managers should align rewards, recognition, and other benefits consistently with individual achievement.
- Monitoring their staff assigned tasks on daily basis must be managers' concern so that to identify those who are unmotivated requiring immediate intervention. To achieve this, good interpersonal relationship between management and staff is required to facilitate good flow of communication and provide assistance to co-workers in need.
- Managers must ensure equity in the distribution of rewards among employees that exceeds their expectations. Therefore, an adequate delivery rewards system and follow-up of the fulfillment of rewards is compulsory to make each employee inclusive.
- Managers should monitor their attitude and leadership qualities within their organizations to adapt to their employees' and match responsibilities to those employees' strengths, needs, and wants.
- The management is required to create an enjoyable working environment that can enhance a sustainable organizational performance.

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