

The Motivational Needs of the Employees and their Impact on the Workplace

احتياجات التحفيزية للموظفين وأثرها في بيئة العمل

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Abstract:

Objectives: This qualitative descriptive study aims to explore employees' motivational needs and to analyze their impact within the workplace.

Methods: The research questions and hypotheses were reformulated to align with the qualitative methodology and to enhance the credibility and validity of the results.

Results: The findings indicated that employees' perceptions in Palestine regarding workplace participation, organizational loyalty, and workplace attractiveness exhibited a distinctive pattern. Highly qualified employees demonstrated a clear preference for collective achievement, suggesting that teamwork and collaboration act as major motivational drivers.

Conclusions: The study concludes that the optimal framework for motivating, attracting, and retaining employees within the Palestinian business environment can be represented by the following components: (company philosophy, leadership style, and strategic human resource management).

Keywords: Leadership Style; Company Philosophy; Motivational Needs.

الملخص:

الأهداف: تهدف هذه الدراسة الوصفية الكيفية إلى استكشاف الاحتياجات التحفيزية للموظفين وتحليل أثرها في بيئة العمل.

المنهجية: أعيدت صياغة أسئلة الدراسة وفرضياتها بما يتناسب مع طبيعة المنهج الكيفي، وبما يعزز مصداقية النتائج وقابليتها للتحقق.

النتائج: أشارت النتائج إلى أن تصورات الموظفين في فلسطين بشأن المشاركة في بيئة العمل، والولاء التنظيمي، وجاذبية مكان العمل أظهرت نمطاً مميزاً. كما أبدى الموظفون ذوو المؤهلات العالية تفضيلاً واضحاً للإنجاز الجماعي، مما يشير إلى أن العمل الجماعي والتعاون يمثلان محفزين رئيسيين للارتقاء بالتحفيز المهني.

الخلاصة: تخلص الدراسة إلى أن الإطار الأمثل لتحفيز الموظفين وجذبهم والاحتفاظ بهم ضمن بيئة الأعمال الفلسطينية يمكن تمثيله من خلال المكونات التالية: (فلسفة الشركة، نمط القيادة، أداة تطبيق إدارة الموارد البشرية الاستراتيجية).

الكلمات المفتاحية: نمط قيادة؛ فلسفة الشركة؛ احتياجات تحفيزية.

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1 Introduction

This study banked on the theories of both induction (Inductivism, 2008) and falsification (Popper, 1959); where it used induction method in analyzing the data from its Phase-1 survey and the data gathered from literature review, while it applied falsification in analyzing the data gathered from opinion survey, where the study examined Herzberg's Two-Factor model and Maslow's Hierarchy of needs affecting the decision making process of the employees in west-Bank. The responses to survey questions answered the study's research questions pertaining to job satisfactions and motivational factors working behind them.

According to Trochim (2001), researchers must maintain the following four criteria towards building a sound qualitative research methodology (p.142):

- Credibility: The researcher's findings must be credible from the perspective of the participants, where the method, means, and conclusions of the study would be believable.
- Transferability: The research should have the potential to be generalized or utilized under different context or setting, like in different projects.
- Dependability: The researcher should be accountable for the ever-changing context of research and should be able to describe the impact of such changes on the research processes.
- Confirmability: The research should be able to confirm its results through adequate proof and should be earning others' confirmation in one or the other way.

This researcher ensured that credibility and transferability were maintained in the investigation by seeking feedback from participants of the study and by explaining the research context accurately; as well as the assumptions that remained at the core of the research. For instance, the researcher sought feedbacks from the two different groups of chosen subjects; the HRM professionals, the qualified employees of West-Bank and crosschecked the inputs gathered from the above-mentioned groups to ascertain about the efficacy of the survey instrument.

The inputs gathered. Subsequently, the results derived out of them definitely have the potential to serve as valuable source of information in both ways; generalized and special context. Since there is no literature on the significance of employee engagement, retention and attraction is available even in the archive of Arab Advisors Group, the largest repository of research reports on west- \bank -Palestine (Arab, 2009).

Similarly, this investigation attempted to earn dependability by observing/annotating all changes affecting the research in the dissertation report. Besides realizing confirmability by conducting data audit through examining the gathered data through reliable computation software and taking every possible step to abstain from bias or partial judgment (Trochim, 2001).

1.1 Research Problem, Questions and Hypothesis

Restatement of the Problem and Purpose:

There is little scholarly research on Palestinians business environment (Arab, 2009) and there is no available researched document about the drivers that work behind their nature of leaving the job at the slightest better opportunity. Extensive searching for previous doctoral level research on the ways and means to engage, attract or retaining Palestinian employees provided no result and thus this researcher felt that there is a great need to underpin the key drivers of employee engagement, retention and attraction in Palestinian business environment.

Research Questions and Hypothesis:

Therefore, aligning with the objectives of study, the primary research question took shape in the following manner: *"What could be the primary drivers in attracting, engaging and retaining employees in Palestinians organization's West-Bank?"*

The primary research question underpinned the following areas:

- Company Philosophy.
- Leadership Approach.
- Motivation and Reward System.
- Cultural/Demographic Influence.

Subsequently, the secondary research questions took shape in the following manner:

- What type of organizational philosophy can bind the employees with the organization?
- What kind of leadership can motivate the employees to stay?
- What kind of reward system can motivate the employees to stay?

- What kind of workplace culture can influence the employees to stay?

The above secondary questions boiled down to the final research question of this study: *"What can be the best solution for employee engagement and retention in the Palestinian organizations?"*

The additional factors like cultural influence over the Palestinian business ambience had impacted the formulation of the hypothesis of study, that the psyche of the Palestinian employees has to be changed. For that matter, they need to be changed from the core, so they require to be intrinsically motivated. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study stands as shown below: *"Successful inculcation of intrinsic motivation is the key to engage and retain employees in Palestine and that is possible through adopting servant leadership style and HPWS (High-Performance Work System)"*.

2 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The qualitative descriptive study was framed between Phase –I and Phase-II, where Phase –I involved interviews with HRM managers of five Palestinian organizations, in West-Bank and Phase –II involved a survey of qualified employees of West-Bank organizations in Palestine. Accordingly, a researcher-designed survey instrument was utilized, besides procedures to select research subjects and data analysis and collection were discussed.

Justification of Two-phased Approach:

Accordingly, the researcher explored all available variables and described the motivational and management needs of the employees of Palestine in West-Bank through a qualitative and descriptive approach with the help of data collected. Descriptive studies can provide a one-time snapshot or description of a population or a phenomenon at a given point in time (Trochim, 2001).

Description of Materials and Instruments

The researcher interviewed five HRM professional currently working in Palestinian companies; to assess the entire situation from HRM personnel's perspective. The aim of this study was to underpin the key drivers of the motivational and management needs of the employees of Palestine, as assessed by the HRM professionals.

2.2 Sample Population

According to Sandelowski (1995), determining an adequate sample size in qualitative research is ultimately a matter of judgment, who observed that a sample population of 30 is a viable starting point in qualitative research. Accordingly, the researcher approached 10 HRM professionals and 60 qualified employees of Palestine through electronic and snail mail with prepaid envelope. However, in spite of the best efforts of the researcher, the total number of respondents in two categories could not be raised above 30.

While selecting the sample population, the following factors were taken into consideration:

- Only the organizations having over 100 employees were chosen;
- All of the above organizations are chartered more than five years;
- They represented various types of industries, like Health care, Higher educations, public sector, Manufacturer and Diversified industries.

The final standing looked as shown below:

Type of Industry	HRM Managers	Qualified Employees
Health Care	1	3
Higher Education	1	2
Public Sector	1	5
Manufacturers	1	8
Diversified Industry	1	7
Total	5	25

Based on that, the researcher prepared two sets of questionnaire to read the situation from the perspectives of both the HRM professionals and the employees. Both sets contained opinion-based questions with five options, where the first questionnaire contained five questions and the second questionnaire contained 15 questions, altogether covering both dependent and independent variables pertaining to research. Later on, the study used qualitative, summary statistics to analyze all responses to a Likert rating scale (Likert, 2009); which measures

the strength of agreement with a clear statement, administered in the form of a questionnaire to gauge attitudes or reactions. For example:

Question: "Intrinsic motivation is the key driver to engage or retain the employees"

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Undecided
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Keeping tab with this format, this study used the response format as shown below:

- Very Important
- Important
- Moderately Important
- Less important
- Unimportant

Accordingly, results were obtained through simple tables that served as determinants of the workplace motivation of west-Bank employees of Palestine and eventually underpinning the drivers affecting their job satisfaction and management needs.

2.3 Procedures

The results of this research were expected to be primarily descriptive in nature based on the survey responses of the HRM professionals and employees of Palestine West-Bank. Therefore, the study followed a logical series of steps to obtain the key drivers of employee engagement, retention and attraction for Palestinian business environment.

Firstly, the research resorted to two famous theories on human needs and motivation, viz. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in the making of the questionnaires.

Next, the same were administered through E-mail and Snail-mail with prepaid return envelope to the HRM professionals and qualified employees of Palestine; explaining them the purpose and significance of the study along with the signed confirmation letter about guarding their privacy in all respect.

2.4 Instrumentation

As mentioned earlier, the instrumentation included two sets of questionnaire, one for interviewing the HRM professionals in West-Bank Palestine and the other to conduct the survey among qualified Palestinian employees, in West-Bank where the researcher sought the guidance from two well-known theories like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and where the prime reason of adopting two-phased qualitative research was to gather data from two major segments of the Palestinians business environment.

2.5 The Questionnaires

Phase-I questionnaire aimed to collect opinions from the HRM professionals, and thus it contained questions pertaining to the HR practice. On the other hand, the researcher tried to align it with the theme of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:

- Basic needs = Proper food, decent housing, adequate transportation, communication facilities, etc.
- Safety and security needs = Workplace safety, safety in residential areas or the general state of safety in the region.
- Social needs = State of interpersonal communication, state of social interaction.
- Esteem needs = Extrinsic reward, intrinsic reward, recognition, training and development, and scope of career advancement.
- Self-actualization = Sense of higher values.

Thus, the HRM professionals were asked to rate the following needs in a scale of five in ascending order like

- Very much required.
- Required.
- Somewhat required.
- It needs to be monitored.
- It is already there.

The Phase-II questionnaire for the sample population from qualified employees of Palestine was based on the 16-hygiene/motivator factors of Herzberg's Two-factor theory of motivation (1968).

- Achievement at workplace is _____ to me.
- Job security is _____ to me.
- Recognition/Reward at workplace is _____.
- Prospect of career growth is _____.
- Workplace conditions are _____.
- Good relation with colleagues is _____.
- Salary is _____ factor to influence my stay in the company.
- Work-life balance is _____ factor to consider staying longer in the company.
- Good relation with leadership is _____ factor in longer stay in the company.
- Quality of leadership is _____ to keep employees involved in company affairs.
- Company policies are _____ in employee engagement, retention and attraction.
- Challenging environment is _____ in staying more with the company.
- Scope for training and knowledge is _____ to consider staying on with the company.
- Better job prospect is _____ to consider new company.
- Scope to participate in decision-making is _____ to engage or retain employee.

2.6 Data Collection Process

According to Trochim (2001) descriptive statistics simply describes what the data shows. Therefore, upon the receipt of two sets of answered survey questionnaires, the same were reviewed and recorded using computation software for storage, data compilation and analysis. Summary statistics were used during the course of the research study to include frequency counts and measures of central tendency (i.e., mean, median, and mode). Simple tables and graphs were used to depict summarizations of the research.

From a theoretical perspective, this research represents an in-depth study on employee incentive systems within the field of human resource management. It aims to analyze the impact of incentives on the work environment and overall organizational performance. Unlike previous studies, which have primarily focused on topics such as job satisfaction, employee retention, salary structures, and benefits, the present study explores a new dimension—examining how incentives contribute to enhancing the productivity and effectiveness of the workforce.

The study is based on the fundamental assumption that modern technologies and advanced equipment, despite their importance, cannot achieve the desired outcomes without being operated and managed by a skilled and qualified workforce. Therefore, the research emphasizes that labor is one of the most critical factors of production, and that investing in human capital development and qualification represents the cornerstone for achieving institutional excellence and sustaining organizational performance.

2.7 Methodological Limitations

Although the researcher assumed that the survey respondents expressed their true beliefs and opinions honestly and with integrity, there is no way to verify this assumption conclusively. Nevertheless, the main limitation of the methodology was that the study was restricted to the perceptions of employees working in Palestinian companies in the West Bank, even though the sample included a diverse range of sectors and categories. Despite this, the findings remain confined to the study population and cannot be fully generalized to all employees within the Palestinian business environment.

Time constraint is another factor as the researcher has felt the need to include a contrast and compare study between two block periods, but that was not possible. Alongside, the instrument used in the study was self-designed questionnaire and thus its validity may need further examination.

2.8 Ethical Assurances

The qualitative descriptive study was conducted following strict adherence to all ethical guidelines for survey administration and data analysis:

- Participants: with the support at individual level, a written questionnaire was administered to the said employees. Their participation was voluntary and their consent was duly obtained. The researcher too from his part, provided them written assurance regarding protecting their rights to privacy. Accordingly, the survey instrument included an introductory consent letter, demographic questions, and opinion-based questions. The introductory letter explained about confidentiality protection and use of research data. The survey instrument did incorporate the respondents' name or other personal identifiable information.

However, respondents' signatures were required as proof of their understanding and consent. In addition, the introductory letter explaining the purpose of the research and the use of the research data helped serve as the means of ensuring informed consent.

- **Procedures:** the survey instrument was distributed to the said employees and they were fully informed about the procedures and risks involved in this research. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete. All data were collected, recorded, and analyzed at the summary level. Participants' names were not mentioned anywhere.
- **Risk and Benefits:** the researcher ensured that there would not be any physical, social, economic or psychological risk on the respondents while completing the questionnaires. Since it was a voluntary exercise from their part, no persuasive or overbearing strategy was used to influence them.
- **Safeguards:** the researcher directly controlled all researched data, and completed surveys were maintained at the researcher's private database. All completed questionnaires were scored accurately and consistently.

3 Study Results

3.1 Overview

It would be pertinent to recall the primary research question that asked, "What could the primary drivers be in attracting, engaging and retaining employees in Palestine organizations?" Accordingly, this research covered areas like Company Philosophy, Leadership Approach, Motivation and Reward System, and Strategic Human Resource Management to gather the relevant information that could be instrumental towards substantiating or negating.

The final research question stemmed out of the questions are as follows:

- What type of organizational philosophy can bind the employees with the organization?
- What kind of leadership can motivate the employees to stay?
- What kind of reward system can motivate the employees to stay?
- What kind of workplace culture can influence the employees to stay?

The above secondary questions boiled down to the final research question of this study: *"What can the best solution be for employee engagement and retention in Palestine organizations?"*

After the study and ideation of the concept, the researcher felt that the psyche of the Palestinians employees in the West-Bank has to be changed and for that matter they need to be changed from the core, and again, for that matter they require to be intrinsically motivated. Therefore, the hypothesis of this study stands as shown below:

"Successful inculcation of intrinsic motivation is the key to engage and retain employees in Palestine and that is possible through adopting servant leadership style and HPWS (High-Performance Work System)".

Therefore, the research analyzed the relevant data from two areas:

- Feedback from HRM professionals of Palestine, West-Bank Area.
- Feedback from qualified employees of Palestine, West-Bank Area.

3.2 Findings from the research review

The review covered areas like Company philosophy/culture, Leadership Approach, Motivation and Reward System, and Role of HRM and its application tool HPWS. In the area of company philosophy, the review clearly showed that under the present context, OCE (Opportunity Creation and Exploitation) is an appropriate choice, which requires all to be more dynamic and flexible to meet any situation and for that matter, all need to be more involved and should be ready to provide their best. Review on Motivation and Reward system clearly showed that the intrinsic motivation is far more effective than extrinsic motivation, as it consciously chases the goals set by it. Reward system too showed the pitfalls of extrinsic reward system, and how it loses its efficacy after a certain point of time or situation. Thus, the fact that intrinsic motivation is the key to employee engagement, retention and attraction has clearly been established.

The review of leadership styles showed that servant leadership is clearly miles ahead in terms of the ability to intrinsically motivate the employees, as it carries the ideal of providing selfless service and 24/7 involvement with the followers, besides working with an aim to create servant leaders out of each follower.

The review of the current state of HRM showed that application tools like HPWS (High-Performance Work System) is an effective tool to intrinsically motivate the employees, as it has a reasonable systematic approach

towards creating an egalitarian workplace environment. Thus, the summary of the findings of the study stands as shown below:

- Intrinsic motivation is the key driver of employee engagement.
- Money or extrinsic reward is not the key driver of employee engagement
- Appropriate company philosophy (like OCE) can be the source of intrinsic motivation.
- Appropriate leadership style (like servant leadership) can be the source of intrinsic motivation.
- Appropriate SHRM tool (like HPWS) can be the source of intrinsic motivation.

The findings of the research commanded a fresh enquiry on their validity in the real-life situation, and more so in the Palestinian business environment in West-Bank. Thus, the research underwent two surveys, covering two major players of the Palestinian business environment, e.g., the HRM professionals and the qualified employees and assessed their feedback.

3.3 Findings from the HRM professionals

The feedback (Appendix - I) from the HRM professionals clearly showed that the qualified employees of Palestine don't worry about basic or safety need, as all respondents said that both basic and safety needs are already there. However, in the case of Social Needs, 33% suggested that it is required and 67.33% suggested that it is somewhat required. Regarding Esteem Needs, 16.67% thought it is very much required, 66.67% thought it is required and 16.67% thought it is somewhat required. Regarding Self-actualization, the half of the respondents suggested that it is very much required and the other half thought it is required.

Thus, the overall feedback of HRM professionals show that the order of needs in Palestine employees stands as shown below:

- Social needs: This zone needs to be improved. This zone involves interpersonal communication and group communication.
- Esteem needs: This zone needs to be improved. It contains factors like training and development, achievement and recognition and rewards
- Self-actualization: In a way this is the ultimate stage of realization according to Maslow (1943), and thus this need can only be realized after the social and esteem needs are fulfilled.

The above findings clearly show that most of the Palestinian employees' needs are intrinsic, and thus they can only be realized if the employees are intrinsically motivated. For that matter, the leadership issue, company culture, training and development issues should get the maximum priority.

3.4 Findings from the Qualified Employees of Palestine West-Bank.

The main concerns of the qualified employees of Palestine are clearly reflected in the survey feedback (Appendix - I), where they clearly expressed about what they think as the important drivers of employee engagement, retention or attraction. The same has been placed according to the order of importance.

- Leadership Quality: It emerged as the most important factor (60% considering it as very Important, 32% as important and 8% as moderately important).
- Workplace Conditions (48% found it very important, 32% found it important, 20% found it as moderately important).
- Company policy (44% took it as very important, 28% took it as important, and 16% took it as moderately important).
- Employee Relationship (56% counted it important, 24% counted it as very important and 20% counted it as moderately important).
- Prospect of career growth (16% saw it as very important, 36%, as important and 48% as moderately important).
- Work-life balance (36% found it important, 32% found it as very important and 32% again found it as moderately important).

The startling revelation is the fact that Palestinian employees did not consider job security and salary as the key driver of engagement or retention. 36% of the employees counted job security as less important, and a whopping 20% even counted it as unimportant.

When it came to judge the influence of salary, 36% of the respondents counted it as less important, 12% considered it unimportant, while 40% counted moderately important. The same trend is reflected when it came to reward or recognition; it was very important to only 16% of the respondents, while 48% counted it as moderately important.

While expressing their views on the efficacy of training and knowledge in engaging or retaining employees, the respondents showed a very encouraging sign. 20% of them saw it as very important factor, 36% found it important, 32% moderately important.

Employee empowerment: it showed a mixed reaction, as 32% considered it less important, though 28% counted it as moderately important 12% counted it as very important and another 12% counted it as important. 16% counted it as unimportant.

The issue of job challenge, however, earned a positive response, as the trend showed in favor of challenging environment, as 40% considered it as important, 36% as moderately important and 4% as very important.

On the other hand, the greatest cause of leaving the company has been identified as "better job prospect", as 52% considered it important and 20% as very important.

Summary:

The collective summary of the findings of the questionnaire survey clearly presents the key drivers of employee engagement, retention and attraction in Palestirina's business environment:

- Good Leadership Quality: The leaders should be able to intrinsically motivate the employees.
- Good Company Policy: Company policy should be able to intrinsically motivate the employees.
- Good Workplace Condition: The workplace condition should be encouraging to the employees.
- Good employee Relationship: There should be no cultural or communication barriers among employees.
- Good Prospect of Career Growth: There should be a systematic process of fostering the growth of the employees.

4 Conclusion and Recommendation

4.1 The Trend

The Palestine employees' perception regarding workplace engagement, company loyalty or identifying a company as attractive showed an interesting pattern. Firstly, the qualified employees of Palestine have clearly voted in favor of collective achievement, otherwise there would not have been so much vote in favor of workplace condition or employee relationship. Next, they are also keen to learn and enjoy the challenge of job, and they expect to be governed by good leadership, and also expect that the leadership would be guided by well-formulated company vision. It clearly showed that they don't rate extrinsic rewards like high salary or individual recognition as key drivers of employee engagement as their responses on this regard fell behind the appeal of collective living, individual empowerment with knowledge, and decision-making ability. These elements serve as fragmented portions of the whole, hidden picture of "great company" that qualified Palestinian employees keep searching on to work for.

4.2 Final Conclusion

The findings from the review and survey clearly speak about the:

- That intrinsic motivation is the key driver of employee engagement, retention and attraction in Palestinians business environment.
- That Servant leadership is the best provider of intrinsic motivation.
- That HPWS is the best helping tool to systematize the process of intrinsically motivating the Palestine employees in West-Bank.

The point 1 above clearly substantiates the first part of the research hypothesis that says, "Successful inculcation of intrinsic motivation is the key to engage and retain employees in West-Bank Palestine.

The points 2 and 3 clearly substantiate the second part of the research hypothesis that says, "Successful inculcation of intrinsic motivation is possible through adopting servant leadership style and HPWS (High-Performance Work System)".

Therefore, the points substantiate the hypothesis that "Successful inculcation of intrinsic motivation is the key to engage and retain employees in Palestine West-Bank and that is possible through adopting servant leadership style and HPWS (High-Performance Work System)".

4.3 Recommendation

The ideal package of employee engagement, retention and attraction for Palestinians business environment thus takes the following shape:

- Company Philosophy: OCE (Opportunity Creation and Exploitation)

- Leadership Style: Servant leadership
- SHRM Application tool: HPWS (High-Performance Work System)

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