

## **A theoretical framework of employee motivation and leadership relationship**

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### **Abstract**

The main aim of this study is to identify and investigate the relationship that exists between employee motivation and leadership of an organization. In this regard it is explained the employee motivation concept and the role that the leadership plays within the organization for motivating employees. For the realization of this study it is used the qualitative method by scanning various relevant sources and studies related to this topic. In this study are emphasized the factors that affect motivation and is given an overview of the characteristics of a good leader. Employee motivation is considered as one of the important subjects related to organization success and human resources management. Motivation of employees even though is a complex issue it will not be as difficult for a manager who knows the employee and implements different motivational programs for everyone. The motivation efforts of the manager must be in harmony with the overall management behaviors. The objective of this study is to perform a theoretical research related to the concepts of employee motivation and leadership and understand the relationship that exists between them.

**Keywords:** motivation, motivation theories, leadership, employees, organization.

### **Introduction**

In the researches about leadership, various leadership theories and different opinions are put forward. Some of these studies suggest that the leadership is a combination of innate abilities and others suggest that the characteristics of leadership are gained over time. Leadership is everywhere where the human community is. Leadership along with motivation and communication is one of the most important tools that lead the followers to a goal. Every organization needs a leader to stand up against the developments that took place in the 21st century. Because of the position in organization, the leader has a key role in achieving employee goals. The success of a leader is related to the realization of the objectives of the organization. In order for the leader to achieve the success, he/she must inspire and direct employees toward the goals of the organization. The success of the organization is not solely dependent on the leadership. In order for the organization to be successful it must have a leader and motivated dependents to reach the goals and objectives of the organization. Motivation is considered as an important factor that directs human relations. Efforts and willingness of the employees will be able only after the leader motivates them. The main task of the leader, is keeping the demands of employees constant and alive; for this reason the leadership must keep the communications channel open and give them the opportunity of self-realization and to improve the sense of trust.

## Leadership Concept and Characteristics

Throughout history, people have needed a leader to lead them, and make them reach their destination. Globalization, technological revolutions, the spread of information, etc., make the working life more ambiguous. A lot of research has been done in this regard and the issue of leadership has been described in many ways. In the studies related to leadership researchers have tried to explain different aspects of leadership such as "specifications, process, interaction, power relation, sides and activity that differentiate the leader from the manager".

The reason of the importance of the leadership takes part in its definition. Leadership is the ability to affect others (Peker & Aytürk, 2002). The leader takes his power from the surrounding persons, which means that he will have power only if he will have followers. These followers get motivated for reaching their goals with the influence of the leader. Leadership is a relationship between leaders and people whom they aim to lead (Kouzes & Posner, 1990). It is seen that leadership is based on three concepts: human, influence and goals. (Celep, 2004)

Leadership is a process which is related to what leaders do (Efil, 1993). As the number of followers increases, the influence of the leader will increase. And as the achievement of the goals is more successful, the leadership will become more obvious (Bateman & Snell, 2004).

Leadership is to concentrate on building a common vision. This means to encourage the people to contribute to this vision. This means to motivate them not by using force but by convincing them.

The reason that the leadership has gained much importance recently is because of the competitive and active state of the world. More change always needs more leadership (Lawless, 1972). Numerous experimental studies have been carried out related to the characteristics that a leader should carry as well as the relationship consistency and communication between leaders and followers.

In this regard a theory has been put forward under the name of features approach. When the features approach is taken into consideration, a leader's general personal characteristics may be stated in this way; credibility, intelligence, trustworthiness, righteousness, empathy, conceptual ability, listening and influence. These features are briefly explained as follows (Saylı & Baytok, 2014)

- **Credibility:** It is seen as the most effective cause of followers' acceptance and follow-up. The leadership process is important for the leader to achieve organizational goals and create a positive impression as an interaction between leaders and followers. Intelligence: is the most impressive and decisive feature that distinguishes one person from the others. This feature creates a differentiation effect by providing advantages such as recognizing and understanding other people, problem solving, producing new ideas and solutions, fast learning;
- **Trustworthiness:** Trust is a leader's most important source of reputation. Loss of trust of the followers is considered a loss of leadership power. For this reason, the leader must use both material and socio-psychological factors effectively to build trust. In an environment of trust, both the employee and the leader can move freely and realize their common goals;

- Righteousness: Righteousness is considered as one of the most important social capital of the leader. It gathers the confidence of the followers together with this social capital and successfully conducts the guiding activity. The leaders must pay attention to what they say and do, and they must not commit what they cannot do;
- Empathy: Empathy is a concept associated with the leader by putting himself in the place of followers. By doing so, it will enable viewers to determine what they think about management and act accordingly. In addition, the leader by developing his empathy ability will successfully orient his followers to the goals of the organization.
- Conceptual Ability: Conceptual ability is one of the most important features of the leader. As the conceptual ability helps to realize organizational goals it may be said that creating a strategy, thinking strategically and creating an organizational vision are among the basic tasks of the leader;
- Listening: Classical management is basically based on "leader speaks, subordinates listen", but today, this thinking does not work. Therefore, the manager needs to be a good listener. They listen to their subordinates and determine their needs and expectations at the most appropriate level and integrate them into organizational goals.

### Leadership types

Different types of leadership exist in work environments that is why each leadership style may fit to the culture and goal of an organization. Traditional Leadership may be examined under four headings according to behavioral styles.

#### ***Autocratic Leadership***

The autocratic leadership style it is also known as authoritarian leadership. It is characterized by manager's control over all decisions with little or no input from others (Serinkan, 2013). As all the responsibility is in manger, subordinates only do what is said to them.

#### ***Participative Leadership***

Participative or often called democratic leadership gives importance to the human relations and establishes a good communication network with the organization. It aims equality and participation, contributes to determining the purpose and vision of the organization, decision making and boosts employee morale (Choi, 2007).

#### ***Laissez Faire Leadership***

This type of leadership is also considered as a leader who recognizes liberty and leaves the leading occupations to their own. Highly experienced and trained employees requiring little supervision may adapt to the laissez-faire leadership style. This type of leadership does not interfere in the decisions taken by the organization. Employees are totally free (Serinkan, 2013)

#### ***Charismatic Leadership***

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner has considered charismatic leadership to have a magnetic effect on people (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). "Charisma is grounded on the appearance of the exception/exemplary quality of a leader" (Steyrer, 1998).

## Motivation Concept

Organizations are trying to achieve their aims and objectives through their employees. At this point, motivation gains importance. It is one of the most important functions of management to motivate employees and direct them toward the goals and objectives of the organization.

Motivation has the characteristics of initiating, sustaining and directing a certain movement (Eren, 2000). Motivation is to demonstrate the high level of effort required to reach the goals of the organization by fulfilling the employee's individual needs (Robbins, 1996).

Motivation is behaving with own desire and wish in order to achieve a specific purpose (Genç, 2004). Motivation has three main components: organizational goals, individual needs and effort. One of the main goals in motivation is to motivate the person to reach organizational goals. In order for motivation to be used for the benefit of the organization and to contribute to managerial success, the individual has to be directed to the organizational goals (Şimşek, Akgemici, & Çelik, 1998). For this, individual needs have to be satisfied.

### *Motivation Theories*

Motivation theories can be classified into two different perspectives: Content and Process. While process theory examines motivation as a process, content theories deal with people motivation and individual needs and goals.

**Content Theories:** Content theories concern human motivation and the sources of these motives. It investigates the factor that motivates behavior. These theories focus on the situation in which the person is in and the factors that cause people to act (Topaloğlu & Özer, 2008).

**Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:** One of the content theories, The Hierarchy of Needs was put forward by Abraham Maslow. According to the Hierarchy of Needs, human needs which are unlimited are collected under five groups. These groups include starting from the lowest category are physiological needs; basic needs such as eating and drinking, safety need; need for socialization; need for respectability and self-actualization.

According to Maslow, the needs of the first two categories constitute a low level and the needs of the next three categories constitute a high level of needs. The theory assumes that the needs at the lower level of this hierarchy cannot be met if the needs of the higher level are not satisfied, (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

**Herzberg's Motivators and Hygiene Factors Theory:** Herzberg and colleagues Mausner, Snyderman in 1959 together with the help of college students conducted a research from where they developed the "dual factor" theory known as the Herzberg Model, (Eren, Örgüttsel Davranış ve Yönetim Psikolojisi, 8th edition, 2004). Even Herzberg same as Maslow has mentioned that needs are the base of motivation. Herzberg assumed that the absence of some work factors made the employees dissatisfied. However, these factors bring the employees into a neutral state. These factors are hygiene factors that are needed to provide a certain level of satisfaction for employees. Other group factors are motivating factors. Because these factors give the feeling of individual success, the individual will be motivated. Their absence

will result in the individual not being motivated. The motivating factors are related to what the individual does and the hygiene factors are related to the environment where the individual is working (Herzberg, 1989).

**Process Theories:** Unlike content theories, process theories examine not the motivational factors, but the process of motivation, from the moment of its creation.

**Adam's Equity Theory:** According to Adam's Equity Theory there needs to be a balance between work inputs and outputs. Employees also need to feel fairly treated in comparison with colleagues. The manager need to be particularly objective about evaluation. Above all, equal efforts must get equal reward, (Luthans, 1981).

**Vroom Expectancy Theory:** According to Vroom; in order to motivate the individual it is necessary to know that he/she will achieve a certain success (expectancy) when he / she makes an effort at a certain level, this success requires the necessary vision (instrumentality) and desire for all level rewards (valence) in order to achieve success at a higher level. According to the Vroom expectancy model, conceptual determinants that generate motivation are emphasized, not individual motivators. The expectancy theory is based on the relationship between the effort of the person and the return to be achieved as a result of performance. The most important factor in the related process is the emotions of expectation that individuals have formed before the behavior they will exhibit after they are motivated. These come in the form of effort-performance expectation and performance-return expectation (Bateman & Zeithaml, 1990).

### Motivation and Leadership Relationship

While leadership is the art of influencing individuals' movements or behaviors; the leader makes the individuals to accept his unique desires with the obedience. Although a part of leadership usually comes from birth, later it can be improved by education. In addition to these features, the leader must have motivational features. Because while motivation increases the level of employee compliance with organizational goals, it has positive contributions such as job satisfaction, (Ünlü, Eroğlu, Gökdağ, & Ergüven, 2013).

Motivating employees in organization provides organizational efficiency and success, (Serinkan, 2008). It is possible that the employees will feel motivated in a comfortable and non-repressive environment prepared by the leader. Today, the success of organizations depends on managers acquiring leadership qualities and influencing their qualifications and their employees, (Barutçugil, 2004). In other words, an organization with an effective leadership and motivated employees will be able to achieve their goals and retain their competitive power. The leader is trying to motivate his employees towards organizational goals by applying the incentive and encouraging tools and motivation theories. The leader develops an emotional communication with employees. The leader may encourage the employees to reach the performance they expect and desire.

According to Herzberg, the main factors that bring satisfaction to one person are; the success, the recognition, the responsibility, the personality of the person and the work itself, (Kasimati, 2010). The success of a leader is firstly related to the motivation of the human resources in the organization. It is possible for leaders to avoid deviations

from their goals, to keep their morale high, to lose their willingness to work, and to make the anticipated contributions to the organization, with effective leadership that can be carried out by the management.

The incentive tools used to motivate employees may change with time, along with progress. Traditionally, wages are the main motivational tool, but nowadays self-esteem, spare time, more communication with managers have become the primary problem among employees.

Motivation and the goals of the leader sometimes intersect with each other. The leader plays a key role in increasing the motivation of employees in the organization and making them more effective and productive. A leader who is dedicated to organizational goals must, while using management functions, above all, need to motivate the employees in a very good way in order to ensure that they are fully channeled into organizational goals.

It is crucial that the leader analyze very well how to effectively motivate the employees because the motivation is complex and sometimes difficult to understand, and it is important to make the necessary efforts in this regard. Leaders in every organization need to improve their effectiveness and productivity by engaging their employees with their own motivation techniques.

## Conclusions

One of the primary tasks of managers who possess the leadership qualities is motivating employees. The process of employee motivation starts with the increase of need, expectancy and wish. The desire and need of the employee arises in direct proportion to the objectives of the organization. Increasing organizational motivation with a good leadership mentality gives priority to the idea that the work that the employees do is important.

Only if a leader knows the true motivation of the employees; he/she may meet the needs of these people. And only if they meet the employees needs they have a motivating power on them.

In order for the organization to be effective and productive, it is necessary for the leader and employees to work in coordination. It is imperative for the leader to know and practice the techniques that will motivate the employees. Above all the leader must trust himself, he can apply without hesitation the opinions and thoughts of his/her coworkers, and he should inspire them to work even harder.

If the employees will get connected to the organization this will automatically improve the performance of the organization. This will help the leader to effectively use the motivation in the organization.

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