

The Relationship between Reinforcement of Employee's Customer-Centric Behavior and Employee Motivation Factors

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ABSTRACT

Currently, there is little doubt that factors such as intensifying competition, high job turnovers, increased market diversity and technological advances demand the present organizations to invest in strategies that encourage customer-centric behaviors. To overcome these challenges and ensure employees to be more customer-oriented, the present author suggests integrated solutions based on prior major motivation theories such as Theory X and Y, Maslow's theory and Herzberg's two factor theory. As a result, the present research explains methods that companies can use to ensure that employees are motivated and satisfied, insisting that employee satisfaction and motivation play a huge role in ensuring that the organization is running smoothly and effectively. Also, the present author points out that adopting better employee incentive programs motivate employees to embrace practices that ensure customer satisfaction and company productivity. Organizations that fail to use the most appropriate incentives to drive their employees suffer huge losses.

Keywords: Employee motivation, Customer oriented employee, HR management.

INTRODUCTION

LoRem The concept of implementing customer-centric practices and its advantages has been a significant theme of discussion for the previous several decades and today, numerous organizations have been facing challenges in their endeavors to totally align with the customer-centric paradigm (López-Cabarcos, Srinivasan, & Vázquez-Rodríguez, 2020). However, for a long time, most organizations have been product-oriented instead of customer-oriented and the scope and economics of scare which are classical economic theories were a main factor as they reflected the market share. As the product-oriented era is running low, and the customer-centered era is coming, there is little doubt that factors such as intensifying competition, high job turnovers, increased market diversity, well-informed customers, and technological advances demand the current organizations to invest in marketing strategies that encourage more customer-centric behaviors in today's complex and competitive business environment (Wirtz & Daiser, 2018) through employee's motivation strategy (Lorincová, Štarchoň, Weberová, Hitka & Lipoldová, 2019).

Prior research pointed out that most challenges that reduce employee motivation emerge due to the organizational structure, culture, financial metrics, compensation packages, and processes,

making employees difficult to adopt customer centricity (Shah, Rust, Parasuraman, Staelin, & Day, 2006). Thus, for overcoming these challenges, organizations need to adopt practices that are driven by strong leadership commitment, processes, and systems that support customer centricity, organizational alignment, and revised financial metrics. Furthermore, the current organizations need to motivate its employees to satisfy the customer needs instead of selling products and services given that customers are the main determinant of what the business is, its products or services, and whether it will prosper. Research conducted over the decades shows that achieving organizational ambidexterity is crucial in various business sectors such as the commercial banks as they rely on the knowledge and intangible assets to provide the best customer experience (Faisal, Mook, Malul, & Shoham, 2015). The human resource department also plays a significant role in motivating the employees through different compensation approaches as well as performance appraisal practices. Organizations can also use various motivation theories to spur creativity, customer centricity, and risk-taking initiatives.

To effectively maintain motivated and creative employees, practitioners ought to understand that human nature is especially dynamic, and rapid advancement in technology has significantly accelerated changes in human nature. Organizational practitioners, as well as the human resource departments, should understand the needs of their employees using motivational theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Fredrick Herzberg Hygiene Theory, and Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Y; Today, at the age of three, children can smartly handle their parents' smartphones and are later bought expensive gadgets such as iPods and smartphones on their 9th birthday. According to research, 65% of American children have their rooms furnished with television, computers, and laptops at the age of 12 (Caudron, 2007). Therefore, this implies that company managers must skillfully integrate various motivational methods that will embrace the dynamic nature of this highly techno-literate 21st generation. Therefore, it would be reasonable that the current study investigates the theoretical perspectives between the reinforcement of employee's customer-centric behavior and employee motivation factors based on prior studies because the major focus of the beliefs and values of businesses adopting customer-centric approaches is to ensure organizational values are constituent with a customer-centric viewpoint (Madjani, 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

of According to the study of Huarng and Ribeiro-Soriano (2014), three key factors determine employee motivation towards achieving certain goals, such as customer-centricity. These factors include intensity, which explains how much an employee works, persistence, which describes how long an employee can maintain effort and a sense of direction, which helps employees to channel their efforts towards the right direction. To foster intensity, direction, and persistence, practitioners employ various methods that are either effective or ineffective (Huarng & Ribeiro-Soriano, 2014). For instance, some managers believe that human beings have an inherent dislike for demanding jobs and tend to avoid it. Due to this belief, such managers control, direct, threaten and coerce workers through punishments, pay cuts, and layoffs. Managers do this under the impression that employees have low ambition towards work and need to be directed and supervised for productivity. However, managers should understand that threats, punishments, and external control are not the right methods for bringing forth the effort and ensuring achievement. Under the right environment, a human being accepts work and actively seeks for more responsibilities.

According to the CEO of Pixar Company, various potent strategies can be employed to motivate employees to operate and structure a conducive environment to sustain creativity and customer-centric behaviors within the organization. First, an organization ought to hire the right workforce equipped with various skills that contribute to the achievement of a similar goal. An employer must ensure that the hired workforce has qualities such as good communication skills, motivation drive, flexibility, honesty, required cognitive skills, integrity to solve problems, and enthusiasm to ensure the customers are satisfied. If the employees are working in teams, a manager needs to identify their strengths and shortcomings to group them so that they will compensate for each other's competencies, skills, and weaknesses. This is called strength-based leadership and has been used by many organizations that make the big decision of going global. The second step should involve giving the "creative minds" in different fields the freedom to make their own decisions at every stage of the development (Catmull, 2008). The 21st generation appreciates working in an environment that is equipped with modern technology, employees work under minimal supervision, and there is the freedom to follow their mind. By allowing employees such freedoms, a company ensures that the customers' individual needs are met urgently without having to follow bureaucratic processes to come up with a solution.

According to Herzberg and his associates, job satisfaction determines the level of employee motivation. In their research, Herzberg and his colleagues interviewed several engineers and accountants, whereby they were expected to describe their experiences and the events that took place in their place of work. They were also supposed to explain whether or not those experiences and events led to motivation and satisfaction. In their approach, two distinct categories of factors that inform about workers' attitudes towards work were examined. Herzberg and colleagues termed one category as the "motivational factors" and the second category as the "hygiene or maintenance factors." The maintenance factors proved to contribute very little towards motivation and job satisfaction because they did not have huge impacts when present or absent (Eid, 2016). Therefore, the Hygiene factors were popularly known as "di-satisfiers" since they only prevented bad results from happening although they do not fully satisfy the employee's needs for satisfaction. Mostly, the hygiene factors closely related to the conditions under which employees operate rather than the actual job description. For instance, managers may raise salaries and give incentives to employees, but after a short while, they become dissatisfied and start complaining again. This is because they become familiar with the new wages, and employees feel that they are not nearly compensated for the efforts they put towards the job.

These compensation practices aim to direct the employees' actions towards accomplishing various goals and making them feel that their efforts are recognized and valued. The employees reciprocate these feelings by participating in the desired discretionary actions and holding positive attitudes towards work and the organization (Ozkok, Singh, Lim, & Bell, 2019). The compensation practices that link remuneration to performance and incentives aim at supporting the social climate through clear communication of what the organization expects from the employees in terms of behaviors and performance.

For this reason, organizations need to use various reinforcement packages to motivate their employees to adopt practices that benefit the firm more. Some of the reinforcements include increasing bonuses and promoting employees based on their merits, allowing employees flexible hours, variable incomes, and paid sabbaticals (Crecelius et al., 2019). The incentive program has

been identified as one of the most beneficial and common positive reinforcement to encourage certain behaviors, actions, and results. When a company employs the best incentive program, they reduce employee turnover, improve wellness, boost loyalty and morale, ensure employees are goal-oriented and increases retention (Mabaso, 2018). Various companies, particularly those that are bureaucratic, have very high employee turnovers because employees are unable to work in such environments. The 21st generation constitutes a workforce that is exceptionally autonomous, experiential, vibrant, and practical self-reliant (Caudron, 2007). Today's generation has learned to be self-sufficient since they are born in an era where both parents are working, meaning that there has not been anyone to supervise or restrict them in any way.

The motivational factors were regarded as satisfiers because they had long-lasting effects on employee motivation and job satisfaction. According to Herzberg, most employees were motivated and satisfied when they achieve challenging or high stake projects within the stipulated time. Their achievement directly related to their creativity and effort, and this results in satisfaction as there is a sense of pride. Most young people are highly motivated by achievement as they get recognition from their colleagues. Although they may get well paid out of their achievement, wages are not their primary source of motivation since they do not have anywhere to take the money. Most of them have no families to take care of since they do not marry until their late 30s. House rent is no problem because they live in their family mansions, and they have been driving Porsche cars since their 18th birthday (Caudron, 2007). Employers have to remember that low stake jobs and responsibilities cause employee dissatisfaction because they feel wasted and have no opportunity to exercise their skills and competencies. Herzberg also found out that increased responsibilities motivates employees and fosters creativity as employees compete to get promotions by producing quality work.

Another source of employee motivation involves allowing employees to advance their skills and competencies by giving them opportunities to enroll in higher learning institutions and hold seminars and workshops where they can learn from one another (Eid, 2016). Lastly, the conditions at work profoundly determine employee satisfaction. An employer must make sure that the "creative minds" have all the necessary equipment needed to finish a project. All equipment must be well maintained and functioning as required. There are high levels of employee retention in organizations that ensure job satisfaction. Productivity is incredibly high because employees become extraordinarily efficient in their departments and therefore reduces the chances of making mistakes that may cause considerable losses to the organization. Additionally, employee retention saves organizations hiring and training fees, which is directed towards various projects. However, a practitioners should make no mistake of ignoring the hygiene factors. Remuneration is very critical to the performance of the workforce (Csikszentmihalyi & Wolfe, 2014). Practitioners should, therefore, know when to use the hygiene factors and motivational factors.

According to Gooch (2018), motivation is an exceptionally significant factor in the wellbeing of employees. For this reason, organizations must focus on offering incentives and tools to employees that help them to make informed choices regarding how to handle customers as well as enhance their overall ability to take care of themselves. All organizations, including the small and medium-sized one's centers, must keep their employees fit and happy to ensure that they achieve organizational goals. In accomplishing this, they should employ several useful initiatives that may include better incentive programs. Currently, most companies demand a lot from their employees,

from teamwork to engagement, to innovation. Meeting these demands, however, means that organizations must be ready to create and maintain a culture of wellbeing (Payne, Frow, & Eggert, 2017). Today there is a significant increase in unemployment, and turnover cases have skyrocketed. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, in the year 2018, over 41 million individuals voluntarily quit their jobs. The number is expected to rise to 47 million by the end of 2020 globally. As such, the wellness of workers is critical for retention purposes for organizations across the world. Apart from the above-mentioned demands, organizations are experiencing such high turnover rates because employees face an ever-increasing complexity in approaches, systems, policies, and technologies in the places of work (Kumar, & Sunder, 2016). In the 21st century, there has been a significant increase in financial pressures, consumerism, rapid technological advancement, and regulatory mandates, making it difficult for organizations to provide customer-centric services.

THEORETICAL INSIGHT THROUGH MANAGEMENT THEORIES

In Faisal, Mook, Malul, & Shoham (2015) investigated whether incentives among other HR practices aimed at enhancing motivation make employees feel a positive sense of stretch crucial in establishing an ambidextrous firm. The researchers also examined how employee behaviors vary depending on their abilities, particularly in cases of contradictory financial incentives paid after the performance and future performance. Faisal and his colleagues (2015) concluded that practitioners should focus on implementing high-involvement practices in the HR department to make workers feel a positive sense of the organization and work. Also, practitioners must consider employee abilities when designing incentive structures and should put in mind that different employees respond to either ex-post or ex-ante incentives. Also, to overcome these challenges that decrease employees' adoption of customer-centric practices and ensure profitability and progress, organizations today need to have motivated and committed workers and strong leadership teams that are always alert to the impacts of various demands and changes to the entire workforce.

According to Schnall, Dobson, Roskam, and Elling (2018), over 50% of the employees, particularly healthcare practitioners across the United States, have been experiencing burnout. In essence, burnout refers to the long-term stress reaction and is characterized by depersonalization, lack of empathy, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and a reduced sense of personal achievement. Organizations across the United States from the front-line leaders to employees must work together to address the stressors and challenges that come with the various complexities of the 21st technological advancements so that employees can stay motivated and committed. When organizations address the challenges caused by burnout, they will help the employees recapture their purpose and joy, which will manifest in how they handle customers.

To prevent employee burnout, Bopp (2016) discussed that organizations should offer incentive programs that help their employees to take care of themselves physically, psychologically, spiritually. It is recommended that these programs be interactive, fun, engaging, and accessible online through mobile phones. The employees should choose activities based on their personal goals and as per recommendations and earn rewards for making positive, healthy choices (Bopp, 2016). The employees should also be encouraged to involve their families in the program, as there is a probability that families focused on health will be more successful. Currently, a significant part of employees' wellbeing efforts has been focused on actively addressing the Opioid crisis. Approximately 1,500 employees have responded to the initial study on Opioid hence resulting in

various vital initiatives (Bopp, 2016). First, the Mental Health and Addiction Resource Guide were developed, and comprehensively explained multiple topics regarding employee well-being. The topics ranged from privacy, medical benefits, use of naloxone, taking time offs, and availability of screening tools (Gooch, 2018). Ensuring that employees are mentally and physically well is crucial to achieving organizational goals such as providing services.

A research study conducted by Gooch (2018) found that organizations with over 500 employees and used an average of two well-being practices such as offering gym facilities, healthy foods, recognition, and promotions, or workshop programs had a turnover rate of 29%. Companies that use three to four practices had a turnover of 22%, while those that used a combination of five or more had a turnover of 18% or less (Gooch, 2018). In 2016, the healthcare companies that employed an average of two best practices experienced very high rates of employee turnovers and suffered losses as they had to hire and train other employees (Gooch, 2018). For instance, the Florida Hospital, one of the healthcare organizations that experiences the least number of employee turnover, follows the CREATION Health program that helps in ensuring that the needs of employees are met. CREATION is an acronym for choice, rest, environment, activity, trust, interpersonal relationships, outlook, and nutrition. Ensuring that the managers prioritize in every area can provide the best interventions for their employees who help reduce burnout and increase job satisfaction. As part of the onboarding process, every newly hired practitioner learns about the CREATION Health so that they can choose the programs they wish to be enrolling in (Gooch, 2018). Through these programs, the organization can reach the employees' significant others and offer counseling programs on topics such as sleep and rest, nutrition, personal finance, and building relationships and trust. Lack of addressing the stressors and complexities caused by nature if the healthcare system lowers practitioners' ability to be empathetic, thus increasing the risks of patient safety, leading to decreased patient satisfaction. These challenges also reduce the productivity of the employees and increased turnovers. Organizations end up spending over \$500,000 in replacing medical doctors and \$88,000 to hire and train new registered nurses (Gooch, 2018). These substantial costs can be avoided by keeping the employees more satisfied and happy. Team leaders, regulators, and executive administrators should transform organizational cultures to adopt wellness initiatives. For instance, organizations should reduce the burnout rate by 3% and increase the satisfaction rate by 9%. Moreover, a three-part manager training series should be implemented to enhance the employee crisis's understanding and support the well-being of employees (Brand, 2017). A free online resource library has also been developed where employers can access tools and documents to evaluate and address substance abuse disorder within their organizations.

In the past, most organizations were bureaucratic, and managers adopted the Scientific Management Theory, whose main proponent was Frederic Taylor. Managers who followed the tenets of this theory believed that employees are generally lazy and would avoid work when they get an opportunity (Velmurugan, & Sankar, 2017). As such, managers mostly used punishments to get employees to perform more. They also believed that the main motivating factor for employees is salaries and therefore paid employees depending on their output. Nonetheless, these interventions only caused hostile working environments and high turnovers. In 1959, Frederic Herzberg developed the Two Factor Theory, which he named Theory X and Theory Y. As explained earlier, according to theory X, there are various factors that an organization must provide though they do not lead to satisfaction or motivation. These factors include good working conditions, salaries, job security, interaction with colleagues, organizational structure and policies, and quality

management (Day, 2016). Herzberg categorized such factors as dissatisfiers because even when provided, employees will become familiar with them and start complaining again. For instance, when the employees' salaries are raised, they only become satisfied for a while but start complaining when they get familiar with the salaries.

Theory Y held that there are motivational factors that organizations can provide and result in job satisfaction. Some of the factors that current organizations can employ include recognition for a job that it well down, providing programs where employees can advance their education, providing fitness facilities such as gymnasiums, creating workshops regularly so that employees can showcase their talents and share information, and providing counseling services among others (Velmurugan, & Sankar, 2017). These factors are attractive to employees because they attend to their emotional, psychological, cognitive, and physical well-being. For instance, most of the current generation, particularly in America, have been driving since their 16th birthday, live at their parent's mansions, inherit their grandparents' riches in their 18th birthday, or have been on vacations since their 1st birthday. This means that huge salaries, vacations, and insurance incentives cannot entice them or make them retain their job for long. These individuals want to be in organizations where they are recognized for their work, be promoted, work remotely, and hold workshops to share their knowledge (Velmurugan, & Sankar, 2017). Therefore, in today's organizations, instead of raising employee salaries, the HR department should try implementing programs that enable employees to advance their education while still working. The managers should also be fair in recognizing the employees who do exponentially well and promote fairly. By doing so, the employees will be motivated to ensure that customers are happy, and the company is gaining profit.

Maslow's theory of needs supports Herzberg's Two Factor Theory. According to this theory, human needs can be categorized into a five-level hierarchy: physiological needs, safety, belongingness, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs (Velmurugan, & Sankar, 2017). An organization can use this hierarchy of needs to ensure they attend to every need of the employees to achieve self-actualization. In terms of physiological needs, the firm's cafeteria can provide healthy foods with low fats and sugars. For safety purposes, organizations can assure their employees of job security through contracts and ensure they pay them well to provide stability at home. Organizations should also create a culture where employees relate, share, and interact with each other safely to establish a sense of belongingness (Velmurugan, & Sankar, 2017). Also, organizations should regularly recognize their employees, approve them for leadership roles, and respect them as well as their opinions to ensure high self-esteem among employees. When such factors are achieved, an employee reaches self-actualization where they do not have to be pushed to do their work and provide better services that lead to client satisfaction as well as reduced risks for losses.

According to Griffin (2018), various steps can be taken to ensure employee wellness. These steps include creating an effective infrastructure for wellbeing, engaging in teamwork, having tools that can measure well-being, and designing interventions. Other steps include implementing various programs that help to motivate employees, evaluating the impact of the programs, and creating sustainable well-being cultures (Griffin, 2018). Building the infrastructure helps in creating and expanding a sustainable culture of well-being. The CEOs, as well as HR managers, must create a dedicated budget to build effective infrastructures. They should be designated to sponsor various initiatives at the C-suite levels, and managers from every department should be the champions of wellbeing initiatives at the practice level. In terms of team engagement, organizations must facilitate

organized group sessions and aim to administer open-ended surveys that give feedback regarding the challenges that employees come across as well as how the challenges can be overcome (American Hospital Association, 2019). Administrators must be able to benchmark and evaluate the initiatives that they put in place in the second phase. They should be ready to explain to the employees why some of the challenges cannot be solved.

In the next step, which includes designing interventions, the management team measures the clinicians' well-being and other medical practitioners to identify if the solutions are effective and feasible (Griffin, 2018). The interventions for well-being solutions can be categorized as improving input, increasing recognition, improving quality, cultivating community, and improving efficiency. The fifth step includes implementing pilots. The team in charge of employee well-being should focus on deploying initiatives that can be operationalized easily to assist in building buy-in and momentum for more challenging and complex solutions. In this phase, the wellbeing team should take time to educate the medical practitioners will be affected by various changes, solicit their feedback, as well as being transparent about the timelines that these changes will take place. The sixth step includes evaluating the impact caused by the initiatives. As the wellness programs are implemented, the leadership team should assess the impacts of the programs, such as fitness gyms, healthy food programs, and counseling programs. It is crucial to include process metrics such as the perception of control over the flow of work, employee satisfaction and clinical care, and the outcome metrics that help evaluate the programs. The last step involves creating a sustainable culture whereby the wellness team focuses on surveying the perceptions of employees periodically to develop initiatives that help to address new challenges and threats.

CONCLUSION

Although Conclusively, adopting better employee incentive programs motivate employees to embrace practices that ensure customer satisfaction and company productivity. Organizations that fail to use the most appropriate incentives to drive their employees suffer huge losses. For instance, research shows that do not offer well-being programs or offer an average of two programs experience high rated of employee dissatisfaction and turnover. Organizations that provided one to two well-being programs experienced a 29% employee turnover compared to 17% in companies that implemented a minimum of five programs in 2016. One of the biggest reasons why there are high rates of turnovers is because companies are demanding a lot from their employees. In the 21st century, companies are expected to learn about new technologies all the time, be innovative and creative, adhere to new policies and regulations, as well as provide customer-centered services. As a result, these employees experience work burnout, which leads to emotional unavailability, lack of empathy, cynicism, and high risks of mistakes. Thus, to overcome these challenges, organizations are encouraged to offer wellness programs such as fitness facilities, counseling, educational programs, workshops, and health food programs to ensure that employees reach their intrinsic goals.

The present research is especially beneficial for organizations across all sectors. This paper explains methods that companies can use to ensure that employees are motivated and satisfied. Employee satisfaction and motivation play a huge role in ensuring that the organization is running smoothly and effectively. It also ensures employees maintain emotions such as sympathy and can connect with clients such as the healthcare sector. Employees who receive better incentive packages also seek to secure their job within the organization. According to research, there is a considerable

correlation between employee retention and job satisfaction and motivation (Ayub & Rafif, 2011; Ramlall, 2004) Therefore, organizations need to understand that employee motivation and job satisfaction among employees play an important role in human resource departments. Organizations must, therefore, focus on offering incentives and tools to employees that help them to make informed choices as well as enhance their overall well-being and health. Most organizations across the need to devise ways that keep their employees happy and fit (Blackburn & Robinson, 5). In accomplishing this, they should employ several useful initiatives to help the employees become better individuals. Some of these initiatives may include educational programs on financial management, counseling programs for the employees. Failure to adopt such measures, employees will become dissatisfied and unsympathetic and lose their enthusiasm to connect with customers.

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