



Impact Assessment of Motivation on Discretionary Work Effort: An Empirical Study

KEYWORDS

Employee Motivation, Organization Citizenship Behaviour, Discretionary Work Effort.

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ABSTRACT *In the present state of affairs in both public as well as private sector organizations, it has emerged as a key concern for the employers to make a scholarly investigation regarding the factors which motivates an employee to work at their peak levels. There is an ample research in the relevant area which reveals that discretionary work effort of employees is declining which is a great threat to the organizations. Although there is a significant amount of research that has been conducted in the area of employee motivation in an organizational workplace, research in discretionary work effort domain is still in an embryonic stage. From the analysis of the data, it was found that discretionary work effort is a measure of organization citizenship behaviour which in turn depends on motivational level of employees. It was further found that discretionary work effort differs between public and private sector telecom companies.*

INTRODUCTION

In the normal discourse of organizational functioning it is natural for employees to expend their individual efforts commensurate to their discretion to perform jobs which in turn are linked to reward expectations and career pursuits. The amount of effort as a percentage of work effort tends to vary greatly from individual to individual. Besides this, the amount of effort a person puts in his/her work also varies significantly in context of temporal variations. Normally, every person aspires to perform at an optimal level but given the real life situations it may not be possible by optimally channelizing work efforts or completely withhold such endeavors. The phenomenon of putting in peak level work efforts in normal parlance is referred to as discretionary work effort.

The concept of discretionary work effort was initially propounded by Yankelovich and Immerwahr (1983) who described it as the voluntary effort employees provide above and beyond what is required. Lloyd (2003) defined discretionary work effort as the voluntary effort employees spend that lies above the minimum level of effort required in order to keep the job and is directed towards organizational goals.

Fielder (2006) defines discretionary work effort as something which could be held back unless workers felt really motivated or inspired to give more. Fielder dismisses high performance work practices as increasing stress and staff turnover thereby suggesting a range of positive approaches to deal with such issues in organizations.

Discretionary work effort espouses a behavior that taps into aspects of working harder than required (Lloyd, 2003). It is intrinsically linked to motivation (Brown & Peterson, 1994). However, effort and motivation are different constructs, wherein motivation is the degree to which employees are willing to expend effort on the job (Dubinsky & Hartley, 1986) as a result of which it gets reflected into an intention to act. On the other hand, work effort is the means by which motivation is translated into accomplished work (Parsons, 1968). Research findings support the distinction between discretionary work effort and employee motivation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

One of the primary tasks of the manager is to motivate people in an organization to perform at peak level (Steers & Porter, 1987). The more pro-actively managers can respond to concerns of what motivates employees, more effective would they be at maximizing productivity, enhancing performance, and advancing the notion of organizational accountability

(Cherniss & Kane, 1987). At present most workers are well educated to a very high standard and for that they demand a reasonable salary and good working conditions. Motivation has conventionally been assumed to be an individual phenomenon. Each individual is unique in which each individual have different needs, potential, values, strengthening history, attitudes and goals.

The existing literature in the area of employee motivation reveals that it has become a complex phenomenon for the organizations to identify which factors are really responsible for employee motivation (Creech, 1995; Emmert & Taher, 1992; Kovach, 1995; Lovio-George, 1992; Medcof & Hausdorf, 1995; Tulgan, 1995) which in turn leads to their discretionary work effort. Research reveals that discretionary work effort is a critical outcome of level of employee motivation (Kanfer, 1987). Thus it is evident that higher than normal level of motivation is expected to manifest itself as discretionary work effort. Further research supports that public sector organizations internationally are facing greater environmental turbulence along with community demands and are perhaps in greater need of corporate renewal than their private sector counterparts (Zerbinati & Souitaris, 2005; Morris & Jones, 1999; Teske & Schneider, 1994). The biggest misconception has been that good wages are always the primary motivational factor among employees regardless of the industry by which they are employed (Tsang, Wong, 1997). The study reveals that employee motivation is a critical factor to study the discretionary work effort decisions of an individual (Grazier, 1992). Further it has been found that higher wages do not always lead to discretionary work effort in an environment where overtime is regularly available and workers have the discretion of supply overtime hours (Chang, Huang & Lai, 2002).

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design deals with the methodology and procedure employed to conduct the research. It comprises of a number of broad section beginning foremost with rationale and scope of the study, objectives and hypotheses formulated for the study, survey instrument design, sampling design etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the motivational level and its impact on discretionary work effort of employees in the organizations understudy.
2. To conduct a comparative study of select public and private sector telecom organizations with regard to discretionary work effort.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H₁: There exists a significant relationship between discretionary work effort and motivational level among employees.

H₂: Discretionary work effort differs between public and private sector telecom companies.

To fulfill the objectives laid down for the study and keeping in view the peculiarities of the present study, a self designed

survey instrument were utilized for the study. A total of 89 items were selected for incorporating them in the survey instrument on the basis of existing literature in the relevant research area. The instrument was designed on a 7 point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The instrument was divided into three sections vis-a-vis Respondent Profile, Employee Motivation and Discretionary Work Effort. The demographic variables were selected on the basis of a study conducted by Robyn Morris (2009) in the relevant research area.

Table 1: Correlation Matrix

	CWS	WE	CW	TOL	RP	MB	GO	DWI	DWT	DDE	OCB
CWS	1										
WE	.619**	1									
CW	.584**	.312**	1								
TOL	.428**	.568**	.472**	1							
RP	.416**	.691**	.429**	.496**	1						
MB	.577**	.681**	.435**	.450**	.674**	1					
GO	.083*	.154**	.084*	.231**	.365**	.254**	1				
DWI	.420**	.285**	.368**	.383**	.506**	.338**	.325**	1			
DWT	.473**	.530**	.201**	.418**	.388**	.408**	.607**	.386**	1		
DDE	.384**	.058	.428**	.224**	.270**	.165**	.220**	.679**	.218**	1	
OCB	.442**	.609**	.326**	.149**	.371**	.493**	.008	.013	.298**	.093*	1
Mean	5.49	5.43	5.46	5.55	5.33	5.36	5.52	5.67	5.55	5.58	5.57
S.D	1.015	.767	.758	.723	1.007	.658	.794	.459	.789	.616	.608

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the correlation analysis, it was revealed that the correlations were significant at 0.05 level of significance. Between co-worker support (CWS) and discretionary work intensity (DWI) the correlation was found to be 0.420. Similarly, correlation between work environment (WE) and discretionary work intensity (DWT) was determined as 0.285. Between challenging work (CW) and discretionary work intensity, there existed a correlation of 0.368. Between team-oriented leadership (TOL) and discretionary work intensity, there is a correlation of 0.383. The correlation between discretionary work intensity and recognition of performance (RP) is 0.506. Between monetary benefits (MB) and discretionary work intensity, there is a correlation of 0.338. Discretionary work intensity and growth opportunity (GO) are positively correlated with a correlation value of 0.325. Similarly, the correlation values of remaining factors of discretionary work effort were obtained.

In order to study and quantify the relationship between motivation and discretionary work effort, step wise regression analysis has been performed.

The following regression equations were derived based on the regression output:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta X$$

Where, Y= DWE (Dependent Variable), X= Motivation (independent variable)

The equations thus formed are:

$$DWE = \alpha + 0.400 \text{ CWS} \dots (1)$$

$$DWE = \alpha + 0.400 \text{ CWS} + 0.355 \text{ GO} \dots (2)$$

$$DWE = \alpha + 0.400 \text{ CWS} + 0.355 \text{ GO} + 0.095 \text{ RP} \dots (3)$$

$$DWE = \alpha + 0.400 \text{ CWS} + 0.355 \text{ GO} + 0.095 \text{ RP} + 0.167 \text{ WE} \dots (4)$$

$$DWE = \alpha + 0.400 \text{ CWS} + 0.355 \text{ GO} + 0.095 \text{ RP} + 0.167 \text{ WE}$$

$$+ 0.116 \text{ CW} \dots (5)$$

Where,

$$\alpha = 2.6$$

$$\beta_1 = 0.400, \beta_2 = 0.355, \beta_3 = 0.095, \beta_4 = 0.167 \text{ and } \beta_5 = 0.116$$

Table 2: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.639	.409	.408	.322
2	.758	.574	.573	.274
3	.779	.608	.606	.263
4	.783	.613	.611	.261
5	.788	.621	.617	.259

The table 2 shows the Model Summary. It is depicted that in Model 1, $R^2 = .409$ which means that 40.9 percent of the total variation in the dependent variable is explained by independent variable. With the inclusion of 'growth opportunity' in Model 2, $R^2 = .574$ which means that 57.4 percent of the total variation in the dependent variable is explained by independent variables. Similarly with the inclusion of 'recognition of performance' in the Model 3, $R^2 = .608$ which means that 60.8 percent of the total variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables. With the inclusion of 'work environment' in the Model 4, $R^2 = .613$ which means that 61.3 percent of the total variation in the dependent variable is explained by independent variables. In the Model 5, with the inclusion of 'challenging work', $R^2 = .621$ which means that 62.1 percent of the total variation in the dependent variable is explained by independent variables.

The second output generated was regarding regression coefficients. The t values of all the variables in the model are statistically significant as their sig. values lie below 0.05. Therefore it can be safely concluded that the analysis predicts fitness of the model.

The second hypothesis raised by the study was that "Discretionary work efforts differ between public and private sector

telecom companies". To verify the hypothesis, independent sample t-Test was applied. Hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

The independent sample t-Test evaluates the difference between the means of two independent or unrelated groups i.e., to evaluate whether the means of two independent groups are significantly different from each other.

From the Independent sample t-test, it was found that the t-values for the factors i.e., discretionary work time, discretionary work intensity and organization citizenship behaviour were 4.6, 8.8 and 8.09 accordingly. As these values resulted in a sig. (p) value which is less than the alpha of .05 ($p < .05$), we reject the null hypothesis in support of the alternative hypothesis and conclude that discretionary work time, discretionary work intensity and organization citizenship behaviour differ between public and private sector telecom companies. The test further revealed that t-value for the factor 4 i.e., discretionary directed effort is 1.74 with a Sig. (p) value of .08 which is greater than the alpha of .05 ($p > .05$). Therefore, it can be concluded that discretionary directed efforts does not differ between public and private sector telecom companies.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

From the correlation analysis, it was revealed that all the factors of employee motivation construct were positively correlated with the construct of discretionary work effort. The correlations were significant at 0.05 level of significance. Coworker support showed a positive correlation of .420 with discretionary work intensity; .473 with discretionary work time; .384 with discretionary directed effort and .442 with organization citizenship behaviour. Similarly, work environment showed a positive correlation of .285 with discretionary work intensity; .530 with discretionary work time; .058 with discretionary directed effort and .609 with organization citizenship

behaviour. Challenging work showed a positive correlation of .368 with discretionary work intensity; .201 with discretionary work time; .428 with discretionary directed effort and .326 with organization citizenship behaviour. Team oriented leadership showed a positive correlation of .383 with discretionary work intensity; .418 with discretionary work time; .224 with discretionary directed effort and .149 with organization citizenship behaviour. Recognition of performance showed a positive correlation of .506 with discretionary work intensity; .388 with discretionary work time; .270 with discretionary directed effort and .371 with organization citizenship behaviour. Monetary benefits showed a positive correlation of .338 with discretionary work intensity; .408 with discretionary work time; .165 with discretionary directed effort and .493 with organization citizenship behaviour. Growth opportunity showed a positive correlation of .325 with discretionary work intensity; .607 with discretionary work time; .220 with discretionary directed effort and .008 with organization citizenship behaviour. The regression model explained 62.1% of the total variation in the dependent variable. As the 'F' value was large, it was determined that the predictor variables of employee motivation were related to the discretionary work effort of employees. It was revealed from the independent samples t test that the t-values for the factors i.e., discretionary work time, discretionary work intensity and organization citizenship behaviour were 4.6, 8.8 and 8.09 accordingly, significant at 5% level of significance. It was concluded that discretionary work time, discretionary work intensity and organization citizenship behaviour differ between public and private sector telecom companies. The test further revealed that t-value for the factor 4 i.e., discretionary directed effort was 1.74 with a Sig. (p) value of .08 which is greater than the alpha of .05 ($p > .05$). Therefore, it was concluded that discretionary directed efforts do not differ between public and private sector telecom companies.

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