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## PERSPECTIVE ON THE MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES IN ORGANIZATIONS

BY

**REBECCA ANA MARIA CHIRIȚĂ\*, CRISTINA-ELENA UNGUREANU and IOANA-ALEXANDRA SBÎRCEA**

National University of Science and Technology Politehnica Bucharest, Doctoral School of Entrepreneurship, Business Engineering and Management, Bucharest, Romania

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**Abstract.** Motivation in the workplace is a topic of interest for organizational managers. This article provides readers with systematic ideas from the literature on the importance of consistently motivating human resources.

Within the article, motivational theories in organizations will be analyzed through a review of the specialized literature. This analysis shows that the level of satisfaction experienced by an employee reflects in their desire to work. In other words, a strongly motivated employee will achieve better performance at work.

The article highlights motivational theories developed by specialists that help organizations to understand and determine the needs of human resources.

This way, employees can be properly stimulated according to their own needs and expectations, recording maximum performance, while also helping to achieve organizational objectives. In addition, the article brings to the attention of readers news regarding the necessity of organizational potential of companies, as well as a workforce in accordance with the requirements of daily activities.

**Keywords:** human resources, employees needs, expectations, work satisfaction, work performance.

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\*Corresponding author; *e-mail*: Chiritarebecca72@gmail.com

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## 1. Introduction

Motivational theories study the moments of initiation and maintenance of positive behavior, helping to facilitate the smooth execution of activities and the continuous development of the potential of personnel. These theories are divided into two categories: process-focused motivational theories and content-focused motivational theories.

Process motivational theories are based on psychological factors that influence the emergence of motivation in the workplace. They analyze employees' perceptions of the working environment and how it is interpreted.

Content motivational theories are based on employees' needs. They describe human needs, and not addressing these needs can subject employees to stress and inefficiency in the workplace.

Over time, several reasons have been analyzed that make it difficult for individuals to engage in activities at the workplace, such as social pressure through comparison, habit, or aspirations. Organizational objectives can only be achieved through the collective effort of employees. The quality and quantity of efforts made by an organization's employees are elements that make a difference in the competitive market.

## 2. The Motivational Theories in Organizations

Motivational theories study the moments of initiation and maintenance of positive behavior. By consistently motivating the workforce, companies can achieve their established goals.

**Process-centered motivational theories are based on the psychological factors that influence the emergence of motivation in the workplace.**

1) **Expectancy theory** describes the degree of intensity of effort exerted by an individual in the workplace. This theory suggests that the intensity of effort depends on the expected value of the reward (Robbins, 1998).

The Expectancy Theory is based on three fundamental elements: expectancy (the relationship between effort and performance), instrumentality (the relationship between performance and outcomes), and valence (the value of outcomes). All three components are necessary to enhance the level of motivation. These elements are illustrated in Fig. 1 (Robbins, 1998).

According to the theory, the level of motivation is determined by employees' expectations and the link between effort, performance, and reward. In this regard, the aim is to create an environment that encourages and supports performance, provide appropriate rewards that motivate employees to be productive and put effort into the organization.

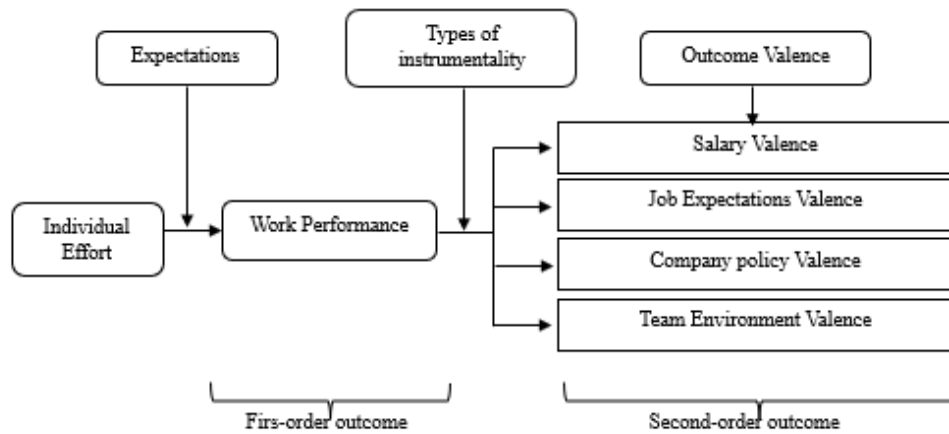


Fig. 1 – The Expectancy Model (McCormick and Ilgen, 1985).

2) **Equity theory** shows that employees are not only interested in the rewards and benefits they receive but also in how these rewards are distributed compared to others. Essentially, employees compare what they receive with what others receive and form a perception of fairness in the situation. This theory is graphically presented in Fig. 2 (Arnold and Feldman, 1986).

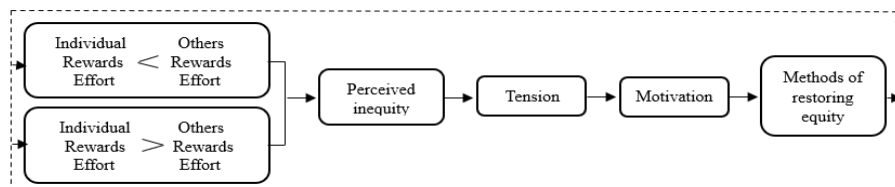


Fig. 2 – The Equity Theory schema (Mullins, 1989).

Within an organization, this theory can be applied in various ways. For example, to avoid a sense of injustice among employees, companies should have clear and transparent remuneration policies. Additionally, the promotion policy should be clear and performance-based, so that employees do not feel disadvantaged compared to their colleagues.

Moreover, another application of equity theory within an organization would be to ensure that employees have equal career development opportunities and access to the necessary resources to effectively perform their tasks. This way, employees will perceive that they are treated fairly and will be motivated to contribute to the organization's success.

Essentially, the Equity' theory can be a valuable tool for creating and maintaining a fair and motivating work environment.

**Content-centered motivational theories are based on employees' needs. These theories describe human needs, and their neglect can lead to workplace stress and inefficiency in task performance.**

1) **Maslow presented** the individual as always in search of more things while also considering what they have already achieved.

Maslow's theory has been applied in organizations to help understand employees' needs and motivations. It suggests that meeting basic needs, such as physiological and safety needs, must be fulfilled before higher needs, such as self-actualization and esteem, become a priority for employees (Eysenck, 1998).

Thus, organizations can consider Maslow's theory to provide suitable benefits and working conditions, such as decent salaries, safe work environments, and satisfactory working conditions, to meet employees' basic needs. Additionally, personal and professional development programs, such as training, constructive feedback, and career growth opportunities, could be implemented to encourage the fulfillment of employees' higher needs.

**Table 1**

*Comparison of motivational models (Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland, Herzberg)*

| MODEL | Maslow             | Alderfer     | McClelland  | Herzberg             |
|-------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Needs | Self-actualization | Development  | Achievement | Motivational factors |
|       | Self-esteem        |              | Power       |                      |
|       | Social environment | Relationship | Affiliation | Hygiene factors      |
|       | Safety             | Existential  |             |                      |
|       | Physiology         |              |             |                      |

In essence, applying Maslow's theory in organizations can help create a positive work environment that encourages employees to reach their full potential and become more motivated and engaged in what they do.

2) **Alderfer** argues that multiple needs from the three categories can be active simultaneously. In other words, if a higher-level need cannot be satisfied, the employee may focus on a lower-level need that its satisfaction could cover the higher need.

Alderfer's ERG theory can be applied in organizations in several ways. For example, it can be used to identify and satisfy employees' multiple needs, making them feel more motivated and satisfied in the workplace (Prodan, 1998).

In the third column of Table 2, the three categories of needs in Alderfer's ERG model developed in 1969 are presented: existence needs (E), relatedness needs (R), and growth needs (G), corresponding to Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

**Table 2***Comparison of motivational models (Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland, Herzberg)*

| MODEL | Maslow             | Alderfer     | McClelland  | Herzberg             |
|-------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Needs | Self-actualization | Development  | Achievement | Motivational factors |
|       | Self-esteem        |              | Power       |                      |
|       | Social environment | Relationship | Affiliation | Hygiene factors      |
|       | Safety             | Existential  |             |                      |
|       | Physiology         |              |             |                      |

Additionally, the theory can be used to develop training and development programs that help employees advance in their careers and achieve personal and professional goals. Moreover, the ERG theory can be used to improve communication between managers and employees by understanding and respecting their needs and building a positive and productive work environment.

**3) McClelland** developed one of the most significant motivational models, describing employees' needs for affiliation, power, or achievement (Saal and Knight, 1988).

To apply this theory in an organization, managers need to understand the predominant needs of their employees. For example, employees with a strong need for affiliation may be more motivated by teamwork and social interaction, while employees with a strong need for power may be more motivated to take leadership roles and have control over decisions.

Based on the identified needs, managers can develop appropriate strategies for motivating and developing employees. For example, to satisfy employees' need for achievement, managers can provide challenging projects and constructive feedback.

**Table 3***Comparison of motivational models (Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland, Herzberg)*

| MODEL | Maslow             | Alderfer     | McClelland  | Herzberg             |
|-------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Needs | Self-actualization | Development  | Achievement | Motivational factors |
|       | Self-esteem        |              | Power       |                      |
|       | Social environment | Relationship | Affiliation | Hygiene factors      |
|       | Safety             | Existential  |             |                      |
|       | Physiology         |              |             |                      |

Overall, applying McClelland's theory in organizations can help develop effective employee motivation and development programs that help them reach their full potential and benefit the organization.

4) **Herzberg Mausner and Snyderman's theory** suggests that the opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction but rather its absence. By eliminating factors that cause dissatisfaction, such as unpleasant working conditions or low salaries, employees will be satisfied that these issues have been resolved, but it may not necessarily lead to an increase in their job satisfaction. Instead, to increase employees' satisfaction, attention must be given to motivational factors such as recognition for good performance, responsibility, and opportunities for professional growth.

**Table 4**

*Comparison of motivational models (Maslow, Alderfer, McClelland, Herzberg)*

| MODEL | Maslow             | Alderfer     | McClelland  | Herzberg             |
|-------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------|
| Needs | Self-actualization | Development  | Achievement | Motivational factors |
|       | Self-esteem        |              | Power       |                      |
|       | Social environment | Relationship | Affiliation | Hygiene factors      |
|       | Safety             | Existential  |             |                      |
|       | Physiology         |              |             |                      |

In general, applying Herzberg's theory in an organization involves creating a positive work environment that promotes employee satisfaction and motivation.

This can be achieved by providing opportunities for professional development, recognizing employees' performance, and improving working conditions and benefits.

### 3. Conclusions

Human resources are undoubtedly the most valuable asset within an organization. To see companies succeed and reach their goals, it is crucial for human resources to feel motivated and have their personal and professional needs taken care of.

The study has brought to light the importance of having the right organizational potential and capable individuals to ensure the smooth functioning of operations and the continuous growth of the workforce. This involves addressing daily task requirements, fostering the ongoing development of personnel, and ultimately helping the company achieve its objectives. As a student, understanding these aspects can provide valuable insights into the dynamics of a successful organization.

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## PERSPECTIVE ASUPRA TEORIILOR MOTIVAȚIONALE ÎN ORGANIZAȚII

(Rezumat)

Motivația la locul de muncă este un subiect de interes pentru managerii organizaționali. Acest articol oferă cititorilor idei sistematice din literatură cu privire la importanța de a motiva în mod constant resursele umane. Prin menținerea unei motivații continue în rândul personalului lor, companiile pot atinge obiectivele stabilite.

În cadrul articolului, teoriile motivaționale din organizații vor fi analizate prin intermediul unei recenzii a literaturii de specialitate. Această analiză arată că nivelul de satisfacție experimentat de un angajat se reflectă în dorința lor de a munci. Cu alte cuvinte, un angajat puternic motivat va obține performanțe mai bune la locul de muncă. Angajatul este responsabil de canalizarea acestui tip de efort către îndeplinirea obiectivelor organizaționale.

Teoriile motivaționale studiază momentele de inițiere și menținere a comportamentului pozitiv, contribuind la facilitarea desfășurării fără probleme a activităților și dezvoltarea continuă a potențialului personalului. Aceste teorii sunt împărțite în două categorii: teorii motivaționale axate pe proces și teorii motivaționale axate pe conținut.

Teoriile motivaționale axate pe proces se bazează pe factori psihologici care influențează apariția motivației la locul de muncă. Ele analizează percepțiile angajaților cu privire la mediul de lucru și modul în care acesta este interpretat.

Teoriile motivaționale axate pe conținut se bazează pe nevoile angajaților. Ele descriu nevoile umane, iar nepreluarea acestor nevoi poate supune angajații stresului și ineficienței la locul de muncă.

De-a lungul timpului, au fost analizate mai multe motive care fac dificilă implicarea indivizilor în activitățile de la locul de muncă, cum ar fi presiunea socială prin comparație, obișnuința sau aspirațiile. Obiectivele organizaționale pot fi atinse doar

prin efortul colectiv al angajaților. Calitatea și cantitatea eforturilor depuse de angajații unei organizații sunt elemente care fac diferența pe piața competitivă.

Articolul evidențiază teoriile motivaționale dezvoltate de specialiști care ajută organizațiile să înțeleagă și să determine nevoile resurselor umane. În acest fel, angajații pot fi stimulați corespunzător în funcție de propriile nevoi și așteptări, înregistrând performanțe maxime, contribuind totodată la realizarea obiectivelor organizaționale. În plus, articolul aduce la cunoștința cititorilor informații privind necesitatea potențialului organizațional al companiilor, precum și a unei forțe de muncă conforme cerințelor activităților zilnice.