

Benefits Of High Internal Work Motivation Comparing Retail Sector To Manufacturing

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ABSTRACT

The Hackman and Oldham Model has been tested in several areas with additional testing needed in the service sector. This study tested the model within a manufacturing company and evaluated several of the dimensions of the model. This paper will evaluate two of these dimensions; high internal work motivation and task significance. The plan that was surveyed has a population of 1,000 with 200 sampled. The company examined is a larger manufacturer of electric motors and the sample was taken from one plant with all three shifts samples. The plant has a population of 1,000 with 200 sampled. A comparison study was done in a major retail company. From the survey sample of 534 employees of the retail company, 330 responses were returned, indicating a 62 percent response rate. The average age of those responding to the survey was 37.9 years. Males accounted for 22.7 percent of the respondents' while 72.7 percent were female.

INTRODUCTION

In order to survive in today's global economy, many U.S. companies are downsizing or reorganizing. Unfortunately this strategy does not consider the effects of this decision on the motivation of the individual.

This strategy has proven to be flawed. When a workforce has been downsized or reorganized, the results is employees could be assigned to new positions that they perceive as not challenging. Performance could then decline, and have a significant negative influence on productivity.

The Hackman & Oldham Model was developed to specify how job characteristics and individual differences interact to affect the satisfaction, motivation, and productivity of individuals at work. The model is helpful in planning and carrying out changes in the design of jobs.

In developing their model, Hackman & Oldham (1976) built upon the foundation of Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner & Synderman, 1959) with some theoretical underpinnings directly from the expectancy theory (Evans, Kiggundu & House, 1979).

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

What motivates an individual to perform at his or her best? This question has intrigued management and inspired much research and interest. This research has focused on job design and its interaction with the motivation of the individual.

The theory of work redesign is based upon the motivation literature specifically on Hackman & Oldham's Job Characteristics Theory (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).

The Hackman & Oldham model was developed to specify how job characteristics and individual differences interact to affect the satisfaction, motivation, and the productivity of individuals at work. The model is specifically for use in planning and carrying out changes in the design of work. Several studies have supported the theory of motivation through job redesign (Ford, 1969; Lawler, 1973; Maher, 1971; Meyers, 1970; Special Task Force, HEW, 1973; Vroom,

1964). Studies of job redesign have found this technique can (1) significantly reduce turnover and absenteeism, (2) improve job satisfaction, (3) improve quality of products, (4) improve productivity and outputs rates (Steers and Porter, 1987).

Several researchers started the job redesign movement (Walker & Guest, 1952; Herzberg, 1966; Davis, 1957; Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959). Job redesign has become a useful tool in developing ergonomic programs, resulting in increased motivation and fewer injuries (Mier, 1992). Using job redesign to introduce technology into the workplace will be very important in the 1990's for there will be a shift from a tightly controlled management structure with narrowly defined jobs to a style that gives employees satisfaction, thus increasing motivation (Iadipalo, 1992).

Work redesign is a unique approach to motivation and company reorganization for four reasons: (1) Work redesign alters the basic relationship between a person and what he or she does in the job; (2) Work redesign directly changes behavior, which tends to stay changed; (3) Work redesign offers and sometimes forces into one's hands numerous opportunities for initiating other organizational changes; and (4) Work redesign, in the long term, can result in organizations that rehumanize rather than dehumanize the people who work in them (Hackman, 1977). The entire concept of job redesign is based upon the theories of motivation and the motivation literature.

Motivation may be defined as psychological forces that determine the direction of a person's level of effort, and a person's level of persistence in the face of obstacles (Kanfer, 1990). Or motivation is simply, why people behave as they do on the job. Motivation stimulates people to do things with the use of inducements and incentives. People are motivated to reach an objective only if they feel it is in their best interest to do so (Bernard, 1938).

Organization hire people to obtain important inputs. An input is anything a person contributes to his or her organization, such as time, effort, education, experience, skills, knowledge, and actual work behaviors (Jones, George & Hill, 1998).

Recent trends in motivation seem to be in the area of job redesign to determine why people work and what really motivates an employee or manager (Kovach, 1987). The theories of motivation are still being utilized to better understand and motivate people. They have been tested and utilized in a variety of cultures (Geert, 1980). Job performance and its relationship to motivation has continued to be an important issue of study (Katerberg & Vkam, 1987).

Basically, motivation theory has evolved into two distinct categories, content theories and process theories. Content theories focus on the importance of the work itself and the challenges, growth opportunities, and responsibilities work provides for employees. Thus, these theories deal with the content of motivation, that is, with the specific needs that motivate and direct human behavior. Process theories do not focus directly on the work but rather deal with the cognitive processes we use in making decisions and choices about our work (Schultz & Schultz, 1998).

METHODOLOGY

The sample for the first study was derived from a manufacturing plant in northwest Arkansas and the second study from a large retail company in Arkansas. A total of 192 employees out of a plant population of 1,000 completed the questionnaire at this location. The second survey was of 89 stores selected out of a sample of 1,953 stores and 534 employees were surveyed. The response rate for the second study was 62 percent or 330 responses. A random number generator was utilized to determine participants in the study.

The employees completed the JDS survey and returned it in a self addressed postage paid envelope to the researcher. The survey instrument was scored and the results related to the Hackman & Oldham model of work redesign and motivation. This data was then utilized to statistically determine if the researcher would reject or fail to reject the hypotheses. A two-tailed t-test was used to determine if a significant relationship exists for each hypothesis. The level of significance was placed at <.05.

The JDS was originally published the instrument has been used in many organizations and subjected to several empirical tests (Cathcart, Goddard, Youngblood, 1978, Duhham, 1976, Aldag & Brief, 1977; Ohdham, Hackman and Stepina, 1979; Pierce & Dunham, 1978; Stone, Ganster, Woodman & Fuslier, in press; Stone 7 Porter, 1977; Barr & Aldag, 1978).

Internal consistency reliabilities range from a high f .88 (growth need strength, in the “would like” format) to a low of .56 (social satisfaction) to .28 (growth satisfaction). In general, the results suggest that both the validity of the items are satisfactory. While it is to the credit of the instrument that it discriminates well between the job (and families of jobs), it takes many research studies relating a concept to other variables to firmly establish the meaning of the concept.

The substantive validity of the instrument has been established (Hackman & Oldham, 1974) and the job dimensions themselves are intercorrelated as found by (Hackman & Lawler, 1971), (Hackman & Oldham, 1974), and (Taber & Taylor, 1990).

The sample for the second was 534 employees selected from 1,953 stores. Six employees will be selected from each store using a random number generator. The sample will be taken from 89 stores, which will also be selected from using a random number generator. The number of stores to be sampled will be computed by using a statistical technique. The population size for the study will be the 1,953 stores. The sample will come from only one division of the company.

Instrumentation

The Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) is an instrument designed to measure the key elements of the job characteristics theory. The survey measures several job characteristics, employee's experienced psychological states, employees' satisfaction with their jobs and work context, and the growth need strength of respondents. The instrument has a variety of scales depending on the section. Sections 1 through 5 will utilize a 7 point scale. Section six will utilize a 10 point scale, and sections 7 and 8 will utilize a 5 point scale.

The JDS is designed to be completed by the incumbents of the job or jobs in question-not by individuals outside the job. An instrument designed for the latter purpose is entitled the Job Rating Form (JRF) and will be completed only by management personnel. The Job Rating Form uses a 7 point scale for all three sections.

The JDS is not copyrighted and, therefore, may be used without the author's permission. However, the researcher did send letters to the authors asking for their permission to use the instrument and purchased a copy of the instrument from the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. A short form of the JDS has also been developed. It excludes measures of the experienced psychological states and uses fewer items to measure other key variables in the job characteristics theory. For this study, the researcher will use the long form.

Reliability Of The Instruments

The Job Diagnostic Survey is intended for use in (a) diagnostic activities to determine whether (and how) existing jobs can be improved to increase employee motivation, performance, and satisfaction; and (b) evaluation studies of the effects of work design.

Since the JDS was originally published (Hackman & Oldham, 1974 & 1975), the instrument has been used in many organizations and subjected to several empirical tests (Cathcart, Goddard, and Youngblood, 1978; Dunham, 1976; Dunham, Aldag & Brief, 1977; Oldham, Hackman & Stepina, 1979; Pierce & Dunham, 1978; Stone, Ganster, Woodman & Fuslier, in press; Stone & Porter, 1977; Barr & Aldag, 1978).

Experience with the JDS, and studies of its properties, have highlighted a number of limitations and suggest several cautions in using the JDS survey instrument. The Job Characteristics, as measured by the JDS, are not independent of one another. When a job is high on one characteristic (such as skill variety) it also tends to be high on one or more others (such as autonomy and/or feedback). The positive intercorrelations among the job

characteristics may reflect problems in how they are measured in the JDS. Or, it may be that most "good" jobs really are good in many ways, and jobs that are poorly designed tend to be low on most or all of the job characteristics. The authors of the JDS are not sure if they have an instrument problem or an ecological phenomenon to over interpret JDS scores for any single job characteristic considered. The authors of the instrument suggest it is just as good empirically-and usually-better to simply add up the scores of the five motivating job characteristics to get an overall estimate of formula for the motivating potential score (MPS) as it is to compute them individually. The advantage of the MPS score is that it derives directly from the motivational theory on which the JDS was based. The disadvantage is that computation of the score involves multiplying the job characteristics, which is generally a dubious proposition with measures that are less than perfectly reliable, and especially so when those measures tend to be intercorrelated.

RESULTS/CONCLUSIONS

In review, the researchers found the Hackman & Oldham model to work for the variables that were used. The results of this study could be utilized in the redesign of current jobs and to evaluate and increase motivation in the manufacturing sector.

Table 1

Core Characteristics and outcomes	Retail Industry Mean	Manufacturing Industry Mean	Sales Industry Mean	Means for Manufacturing industry
Skill Variety	4.46	4.89	4.8	4.2
Task Identity	5.25	3.94	4.4	4.3
Task Significance	5.59	5.31	5.5	5.3
Autonomy	5.30	4.67	4.8	4.5
Feedback from Job	5.05	4.07	5.4	4.7
High Internal work Motivation	5.61	5.18	5.7	5.3

This study focused on two of the elements, high internal work motivation and task significance. The study found that high internal work motivation was .43 higher for the retail industry than in the manufacturing company. This indicated that high internal work motivation was more of a motivator for those in the retail versus the manufacturing sector.

Task significance was .28 higher in the retail that manufacturing industry. This once again was indicative that task significance was more of a motivator in the retail that sales industry. If you compare these to the average for the manufacturing industry, high internal work motivation was .31 higher and task significance was .29 higher.

The researchers found that the scores for skill variety were higher for females in the manufacturing industry than in the retail or sales industry. It was also found in the research that task identity was higher for the females in the survey for the retail industry than in manufacturing or sales. When task significance was evaluated the researchers found that it was higher in the retail industry than in manufacturing and sales. The score for autonomy was higher for females in the retail industry than in manufacturing or sales and feedback was higher in the sales industry than in the retail or manufacturing. The final dimension which was high internal work motivation was higher for the females in the retail than in the manufacturing or sales industries.

Table 2

Gender	
Male	119
Female	379
Missing	24
Total	522
Age-Average	37.9
Race/Ethnic Background	
White	380
Black	36
Hispanic	24
American Indian	46
Asian	6
Other	3
Missing	27
Total	522
Marital Status	
Single	118
Divorced	36
Married	319
Separated	8
Widowed	14
Missing	27
Total	522

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The researches would suggest that the study be replicated in the service industry to see how the results compare to what was found in this study, and to look at males, as well as race and ethnic backgrounds and marital status to see which core characteristic was highest in the retail, sales and manufacturing industry.

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