Role of Different Employee Motivation Practices on Employee Performance and Productivity

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Abstract:- The study aimed to examine the role of different motivation practices on employee performance and productivity. A qualitative approach was used with the interview data collection method. Open-ended interview questions were used as a data collection instrument and thematic analysis was used to report results. The key findings stated that work-from-home (WFH), training and development (T&D), performancebased rewards, and knowledge sharing are key motivational practices to enhance employee performance and productivity. Additionally, for gaining benefits from WFH, it is pivotal for companies to provide proper support to employees. T&D can deliver benefits of improved performance and productivity for employees when sessions are career oriented or aligned with employee career development.

Keywords:- Work-from-home (WFH), Training and development (T&D), Performance-based rewards, Knowledge sharing, Employee performance and Employee productivity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee motivation is one of the major concerns of companies throughout the world (Bima, Moh'd Musalli & Yusuf, 2021). Employees are assets for organisations and play a crucial role in the success of companies and the attainment of their goals for which employees' performance should be good. Successful companies know the importance of their employees and know that happy employees are equal to greater productivity (Hobson, 2019). Team Sage (2023) concludes on the motivational level of employees or the conducted survey in which the motivational level of employees throughout the world has been discussed. The study unveiled that only 15% of employees feel motivated or engaged throughout the world. The survey outcomes found that motivated employees are 87% less likely to leave their jobs. Around 39% of employees feel that they are not appreciated for their efforts and above all, 89% of employees were thinking of leaving their jobs in the search of a better opportunity. Further, the research disclosed that 66% of the employee were motivated and the core reason for their motivation was the presence of a corporate incentive program. Moreover, it is realised that 87% of employees are struggling to find work-life balance and expect that their employees help them meet their obligations for achieving work-life balance (Team Sage, 2023).

Creating and maintaining employee motivation is not an easy task, multiple factors negatively influence employees and their motivational level that are necessary to address. For example, when the tasks employees are performing mismatch their values, they feel demotivated. When employees believe that they do not have the capabilities to perform the tasks they get demotivated. Further, when employees face negative emotions at the workplace such as anxiety, depression and anger, they become demotivated and unable to carry out their tasks. Moreover, error is a common issue that occurs while employees work or perform their tasks, but when employees are not aware of the reasons leading them towards errors or when the struggle is not in their control, they are not motivated to do the task (Clark & Saxberg, 2019). Therefore, it is pivotal for companies, they address these issues to motivate employees by choosing the best motivational practices.

There is a range of employee motivation practices that have been highlighted in different studies such as Bélanger, Veilleux and Tremblay (2016) highlighted information sharing, sense of belongingness, work flexibility, internal communication between managers and teams, and attitude towards risk-taking as motivational practices. On the other hand, Kim (2022) highlighted that some motivational practices that have a significant influence on employees include coaching and mentoring, performance-related rewards, internal promotion opportunities, employment security, performance appraisal, and fair pay and other employee benefits (Kim, 2022). Career development, recognition, employee behaviour development, and the development of employees' morale and attitude are also motivational practices (Malik and Ranga, 2021).

Employee motivation is an important organisational aspect to enhance employee performance and productivity. It is found that motivated employees are more likely to perform well compared to employees who are not motivated. According to Sudiardhita et al. (2018), employee motivation is necessary for employees' performance. The study highlighted compensation as a motivational practice that positively influences employee performance. Further, Niati, Siregar and Prayoga (2021) highlighted training as a motivational practice and its positive impact on employees' work performance and career development. Supporting the positive impact on employee performance and productivity, Paais and Pattiruhu (2020), highlighted empowerment and flexibility as motivational practices. However, companies cannot use all these practices to motivate employees at a time; hence, they need to choose the most effective ones to motivate their employees. Therefore this research aims to examine the role of different motivational practices on employee performance and productivity.

II. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

There are multiple studies (Niati, Siregar & Prayoga, 2021; Arif, Zainudin & Hamid, 2019; Sugiarti, 2022; Bélanger, Veilleux and Tremblay, 2016; Kim, 2021; Paais and Pattiruhu, 2020) that have been conducted to evaluate the role of employee motivational practices, but none of the studies presented the certain combination of the motivational factors that have been used in this research. The paper discussed work-from-home (WFH), training and development (T&D), performance-based rewards, and knowledge sharing as motivational practices and their role in enhancing employee performance and productivity.

The decreased motivational level of employees and their performance encouraged the researcher to reflect on the specific practices that can be used to enhance the performance and productivity level of employees (Team Sage, 2023). This research is unique from the other studies because this combines the motivational practices that have been least discussed compared to the other motivational practices to enhance employee performance and productivity. Further, this research checked the role of these motivational practices of combined factors such as employee performance and productivity. The major contribution of the study is to reflect on the ways these motivational practices not only enhance the performance of employees but make them productive as well.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite facing multiple challenges, employees give their best to perform their tasks and make use of resources in an optimum way and the degree they can is a motivation. In other words, an employee using all his efforts to perform their duties is a definition of employee motivation (Wuryani et al., 2021).Khoreva and Wechsler (2018) found that employee mental and physical well-being both contribute to employee performance. The study disclosed that motivationenhancing and skills and opportunity-enhancing practices contribute to employee job performance positively. The study found that physical well-being and motivational practices enhance in-role job-related performance. On the other hand, psychological well-being and motivational practices enhance employee innovative performance.

Employee motivation is critical for their performance and productivity; hence, companies must adopt to adopt the right strategy for motivating employees. Dewydar (2021) found that rightfully companies adopt the strategies of prohibiting discrimination and harassment regarding the motivation of employees and this is not the only strategy that is used for motivating employees to improve their performance. Companies also use financial motivation such as performance-based pay for employees to keep them consistent in their work. As a motivation practice, companies design guidelines and develop some rules to be followed for staff and managers so they can benefit from those guiding principles. The major reason for enhancing employee performance is to improve the organisational profitability and employee improve their performance and help achieve organisational goals in return for rewards.

Attainment of employee goals and their motivation is also dependent on the development of a good atmosphere and meeting the need of everyone within the organisation. The study found the development of codes of ethics as a good practice to motivate employees, as this code of ethics includes the guidelines for creating a green environment, green HR systems, procedures, and high performance.

According to Kuswati (2020), some motivational practices such as the principle of participation, communication, recognition, and paying attention to employees and reciprocating them are the practices that contribute to improved employee performance. On the other hand, Niati, Siregar and Prayoga (2021) emphasised employee training and career development as motivational practices that contribute positively to employee performance and productivity. Pang and Lu (2018) highlighted dimensions of motivation and found that remunerations, job environment, and employee autonomy have a positive influence on job performance while job workload hurts employee productivity and job performance. For example, if the employee is overburdened with multiple other tasks that are not part of his duties then he cannot deliver higher output.

Work from home (WFH) was used during Covid-19 as a motivational practice to enhance the productivity and performance of employees, but Mustajab et al. (2020) argued that due to the perception of people that home is for rest the WFH had a negative influence on employee performance and productivity. The study found that fatigue which is results from multitasking in which employees perform more than two jobs at home such as performing house-related responsibilities and office work while handling children or elders as well. These extra responsibilities create stress and lead employees towards demotivation and reduced employee productivity and performance. On the contrary, Weerasinghe and Jayawardana (2020) argued that WFH has multiple positives for employees including work-life balance and gives a perception of providing support to employees that greatly contribute to the morale of staff and improve their productivity and performance as well. Further, Ma (2018) unveiled that WFH gives employees the freedom to do work as per their flexibility and provides them comfort which results in enhanced performance and productivity. Similarly, Magnusson (2019) reported the positive influence of WFH on employee productivity and performance while increasing the level of motivation because employees gain an opportunity to enjoy themselves with their families and combine the time for their work and family.

Work flexibility is a motivational practice that companies use to motivate their employees to enhance employee performance. Davidescu et al. (2020) found that the labour market is changing continuously and work flexibility provides employees with an opportunity to maintain a balance between their lives and work that leads employees to higher performance. online team building activities, virtual learning, development, online courses, communication exercises, acknowledgement sessions, new skill training, recognitions and webinar dealing with stress

and anxiety are some of the key practices that contribute to the success of employees and WFH is also one of the key motivational practices leading employees to improved employee productivity and performance (Chanana, 2021).

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The specific variables for the research were selected by taking help from google scholar, different motivational practices were used as keywords and their impact on employee motivation and productivity. Motivational practices with the least results were selected for this research to check the impact on both employee performance and productivity simultaneously. To collect the data for this research, a qualitative research method was used and emails were sent to professionals working in different organisations to invite them for interviews. The data from 15 open-ended interviews were included in the research that contains the answers to all questions. The collected data was used to develop transcripts that were saved in a password-protected file so no third-party member can open the file or gain access to the data. This step was taken to ensure the confidentiality of the information. For data analysis, thematic analysis was used and proper steps were followed to generate codes and develop themes. However, during the analysis, the name of respondents, their organisations, age, gender, and their positions have not been maintained to keep them anonymous.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

A total of 15 professionals working in different organisations were selected for interviews. The interview was based on 7 open-ended questions. The interview was transcribed and data was extracted from them, the codes were generated and final themes were developed.

Open statement	Coding	Final Themes
The opportunity to work from home kept me engaged	Flexibility as a positive outcome	Working from home
with the organisation.		positively related to
When I work from home, I can complete my work as per	Ease of managing work from home	performance
my feasibility and manage my affairs as I want which		
keeps me motivated to perform well.		
I am comfortable working here as I can perform my job	Meeting the social obligations	
responsibilities with less input without compromising		
work quality while not compromising my social		
responsibilities		
Organisational learning programs enable me to give my	Learning programs improve employee	T&D enhance employee
best without outing extra effort which enhances my	performance	productively
performance		
Attending seminars and educational programs within	Educational programs improve	
and outside the company improves my ability to work	productivity	
more efficiently		
Coaching and mentoring have always been a source of	Coaching and mentoring augment	
enhanced capabilities and skills for me.	working skills	
Team working at the workplace always enhance my	Enhancing information results in	Knowledge sharing
ability to perform my duties well by enhancing my	increased performance	culture
information		
Communication and coordination improve my ideas and	Communication and coordination	
abilities to perform my work in less time and resources	increased working capabilities	
without compromising quality		
The supportive and cooperative work environment in	The supportive and cooperative	
terms of discussion is the backbone of delivering	environment of discussion	
productivity.		
Rewards always encourage employees to give their best	Rewards motivate employee to improve	Performance-based
for achieving workplace goals	their performance	rewards enhance
Employees perform well when they are aware of their	Performance appreciation encourages	employees' performance
performance appreciation and get something in return.	employees to perform well	
Resource efficiency is appreciated in my organisation	Resource efficiency and recognition	
and companies recognise employees who complete their	encourage employees to be productive	
work using fewer resources		

Table 1: Thematic Analysis of Different Motivational Practices Agreed by Respondents

A. Theme 1: Working from Home Positively Related To Performance

From 15,a totalof 9 respondents agreed that working from home is one of the best practices that helps enhance their employee performance. One of the respondents stated,

"Work from home provides a flexibility to attend the personal affairs and people with fresh minds without a burden of any responsibility complete their work in a better way.....employees create ways to enhance their outcomes and they are more productive."

To respondents agreed with the theme that working from home is positive because it provides a sense of empowerment to manage the work on their own and handle the deadlines as per the feasibility. Employees can better manage their personal and professional affairs as per their feasibility which enhances their performance and productivity.

A respondent commented,

"Work-life balance is a key to good performance, employees who lack work-life balance face stress that lead them towards family conflicts and therefore this unhealthy personal life also influences the performance of employees at work. Hence, virtual working is a good practice to avoid these issues."

On the contrary, one of the respondents disregarded the positive impact of work-from-home practice on employee performance and stated,

"Work from home may be a good approach for few companies, but often employees become unproductive and their performance declines. They take extra advantage of this opportunity which does not go in favour of organisations".

Another respondent reported,

"Work from home makes employees unproductive".

B. Theme 2: T&DEnhances Employee Productivity

All 15 respondents accepted the importance and positive association of T&D programs with employee productivity and performance. One of the employees stated,

"Change has become a norm of organisations and employees resist change because they feel the threat of losing their jobs. To reduce employee threats and keep them motivated, T&D is one of the best tools that organisations can use. T&D educate employees and teach them the ways of implementing changes and adjusting as per new processes and procedures".

In support of the statement, three of the respondents particularly reflected on T&D as a source of enhancing the understanding of employees about their work and the way their work fits the organisational goals and their vision and mission's attainment. They said that T&D contributes towards enhancing the knowledge and skills of employees that directly affect their performance positively. Further, employees are motivated when they understand how their work is contributing to the success of companies. Conversely, one respondent presented a different view related to the T&D of employees and commented,

"Training of employees on core skill enhancement is not same as motivational training. T&D doesn't need to motivate employees, the fact is that it improves the skills of employees which results in enhancing the quality of employees' work which makes employees happier and they become motivated to do more".

Similarly, one responder argued,

"Offering training opportunities and empowering employees are not the only factors that contribute to employee motivation, instead employees should be communicated how this training can enhance the career growth chances of employees. Training should be a personalised learning path which should be aligned with their career"

C. Theme 3: Knowledge Sharing

The majority of respondents commented that employees should share their knowledge as it enhances the performance of employees and companies should use different practices to motivate employees to share their experiences with other employees within the organisations.

One respondent said,

"Knowledge sharing is a motivational practice for employees and it contributes to their skills and helpsto enhance their knowledge portfolio".

Another respondent shared his experience by saying,

"Knowledge sharing helps learn lessons from previous mistakes, which reduces the chances of errors in future working. It becomes easier for employees to realise what will work and what not motivates them to work further on new practices, techniques and ideas to improve their work"

D. Theme 4: Performance-Based Rewards

All respondents agreed on the positive impact of performance-based rewards on employee productivity and motivation. None of the respondents went against these motivational practices.

One respondent said,

"Employees are motivated if they have an option of getting any benefits in return for their performance and this motivation to have benefits encourages them to perform their tasks in the best possible ways".

Another respondent argued,

"Salaries are the basics that employers provide to their employees in return for their work, so salary cannot be a motivational factor to perform well. However, to keep employees motivated and get maximum out of them in terms of productivity and performance, employers have to plan some extra financial benefits."

One respondent stated,

"Financial benefits always work for employee motivation to give their best".

VI. DISCUSSION

When employees were asked about the importance of motivational practices, all 15 professionals agreed that employee motivation is crucial for improved performance and productivity. However, the motivational practices used by companies to enhance productivity and performance vary. In other words, there is a difference between motivational practices that organisations use to enhance employee performance and productivity. These different practices deliver companies with distinctive outcomes. For example, the results disclosed that working from home became one of the common practices during Covid-19 and it had both positive and negative effects on employees and their performance. Such as, when respondents were asked about the work from home as a practice to motivate employees, some of the respondents said that they experienced this practice during Covid-19 and allowed their employees to work from home, which proved to be a positive initiative, as the team working enhanced and proper communication enabled employees to work easily from home. Employees were flexible and felt safe while performing their regular tasks. These outcomes can be supported by the study of Pang and Lu (2019) who stated that autonomy has a positive influence on employee performance. This is to accept that WFH provides freedom to employees to work as per their flexibility.

However, on the other hand, some respondents reported negative outcomes and stated that working from home is negatively associated with employee good performance and productivity. There is a possibility that organisations which are reporting negative outcomes did not provide resources to their employees to work from home properly. For example, poor internet connectivity, absence of timely communication or lack of communication, and lack of team working are some of the factors that contribute negatively to the performance of employees, and their productivity declines. If the employees are not provided with proper resources and support, they may feel stress while working from home and this may also influence their work-life balance negatively. These outcomes are supported by Mustajab et al. (2021) and (Aropah and Sarma, 2020). Aropah and Sarma (2020) stated that organisational related technology, home-based support to telecommunication, and communication are the necessary factors that contribute positively to WFH setup and result in improved employee performance and productivity. Further, the response that employees take extra advantage of WFH can be interpreted that employees may get lazy and feel overly comfortable which leads them towards a decline in productivity. This outcome of the negative impact of WFH on employee performance is also supported by (Mustajab et al., 2021) who reported the negative outcome of WFH on employee performance and said that employees' perception that the home is a place to rest negatively influences their ability to work. This means it is not only the external factors

(managerial support, communication and availability of resources) that negatively influence the performance of employees while working from home, but the internal feelings and perceptions are also the cause to lead employees towards slow performance and lack of productivity.

The second theme of the research is related to the T&D of employees that have been discussed as a motivational practice motivating their performance and productivity. When the respondents were asked about T&D as a motivational practice to improve employee performance, respondents agreed that it has a positive association with employee performance and productivity. This may be because of the reason that T&D develop employee skills and educated them to make efficient use of new technologies that result in enhancing their productivity. Employee training enhances the capacity of employees to adopt new methods and technologies that enhance their capabilities to innovate as well that count as improved performance. T&D enhances employee knowledge that helps them stay ahead of the competition that just not motivates them but delivers their best to organisations as well. Trained employees feel valued and their selfconfidence increases, they know that they have career growth chances and this sense of positivity keeps them motivated and enhances their productivity. It can be said that T&D by improving the capabilities of employees enable them to perform their work efficiently which results in reducing waste in terms of money, time and energy. Trained employees are less likely to make mistakes that result in saving time and resources and increasing productivity.

However, training is a performance improvement practice by enhancing the skills of employees, but not a motivational practice is a new finding of this research. The results disclosed that training on skill development and motivational training are two different concepts. Companies mostly offer training to employees to improve their core skills and capabilities that can enhance their productivity and performance, in this sense, training is not a motivational practice, but motivation is an outcome of T&D for employees. Training is a skill development practice and motivation is an outcome of that quality performance measures an outcome supported by (Davidescu et al., 2020) and (Chanana, 2021), as both highlighted T&D as a motivational practice for employees and discussed the indirect impact on employees motivation by improving the employee's capabilities to perform their tasks efficiently that lead then towards Job motivation.

Further, the study outcomes disclosed that if companies want to use training as a motivational practice for employees, they should communicate to their employees that training is aligned with their career growth and how it can benefit them in the future. These outcomes are supported by Niati, Siregar and Prayoga (2021), as they stated that T&D is a career development practice that motivates employees, which means if the element of career development is excluded from T&D, it may not be the motivational practice to employees and just a way of enhancing their performance and productivity for the

attainment of organisational goals and not for any personal benefits. This means, training as a motivational tool should be a personalised learning path towards career development for employees rather than a randomized session.

The third theme for this research is knowledge sharing as a motivational practice. The research outcomes unveiled that knowledge sharing is one f the key motivational practices to drive employees towards the generation of new ideas and practices. For example, seniors by sharing their experiences that what worked during their completion of certain projects and what did not, provide employees with an idea of the ineffective practices and potential difficulties that motivate them to search for solutions to the potential problems and innovate ideas and processes to complete the work successfully. These are the outcomes that have been supported by Bélanger, Veilleux and Tremblay (2016) as authors also highlighted knowledge sharing as one of the motivational practices. Knowledge sharing as a motivational practice is relatively a new concept that has been discussed in this research, otherwise, in previous literature, authors (Nguyen et al., 2019; Gagne et al., 2019; m Ahmed & Karim, 2019) have been discussing motivational practices to enhance knowledge sharing and not discussing this practice as motivational.

The fourth and last theme is about performance-based reward systems. The results disclosed that getting a job and in consequence, the attainment of good pay may not be the reward for employees and they may not be motivated to do a good job. The outcomes revealed that employees must be rewarded with benefits in return for the extra effort they did for achieving the organisational goals. The increased performance of employees and their efforts should be rewarded and recognised. Employees give their best when they have a hope of getting something in return and these performance-based rewards keep an employee motivated to give their best for the organisation. These outcomes that performance-based rewards have a positive impact on employee productivity and performance are supported by Kim (2022) whostated that performance-based rewards are a motivational technique for performance and productivity increment.

Dewydar (2021) also supported similar facts and regarded financial rewards as a key to keeping employees consistent in their performance. The author stated agreed with performance-based rewards as a motivational practice by saying that employees improve their performance when they are aware of the benefits that would receive in return for their efforts. As per the results, there is a possibility that some performance-based rewards motivate employees and some do not. In other words, the preferences in terms of rewards vary between employees, one size is not fit for all. However, the financial rewards in return for employees' increased performance, always work and employees get motivated. Financial rewards always contribute to employee performance and productivity increments are facts that have been supported by (Dewydar, 2021). The author insisted that performance-based pay such as financial rewards is critical to keeping employees consistent in their performance. Hence, it is mandatory for companies they plan for

performance-based rewards and most specifically financial rewards.

VII. CONCLUSION

Considering the research outcomes, it is suggested that when employees use WFH as a motivational practice for employees to improve their work, they provide proper support to them in terms of technology, internet connectivity, training, effective communication and all other tools necessary to enhance the productivity and performance of employees. Further, employee performance should be monitored at certain intervals so they may not get easy on their tasks and think of home as a place to rest when working inan office. The absence of monitoring and not providing support to top employees can result in the adverse impact of WFH practices on employee productivity and performance. On the other hand, though T&D is a motivational practice and contributes to the increment of employee performance and productivity, employees are motivated to give their best in return to T&D is not always the case. To keep employees motivated, T&D sessions must be career oriented.

Further, it is evaluated that knowledge sharing is a motivational practice that contributes to the effective decision-making of employees. Seniors share their experiences with employees and based on those experiences, employees get motivated to make informed decisions that what to follow and what not which results in effective decision-making and enhanced employee performance and productivity. Moreover, companies to keep their employees motivated to enhance their performance and productivity should offer them performance-based rewards. Hence, it is mandatory for companies they plan for performance-based rewards and most specifically financial rewards that should be monetary as they are always effective.

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