

Misconceptions on Employees' Motivation and Ways to Correct Them

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Abstract

The study of motivation and its implication to employees is a contemporary agendum in human resources management. Admittedly, there have been manifold misconceptions about employees' motivation. The misconceptions have been causing diverse sentiments among management scholars, practitioners and sometimes employees when trying to elucidate and apply the concept. Such misconceptions entails as to whether employees are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, if some of employees are not at all motivated or all employees are motivated by single package and if money is the only center of motivation. The study assesses such misconceptions and suggests fashions of correcting them. The study used thirty two (32) respondents and data were collected through self-administered questionnaire method. The result of the study provides that, the discussed misconceptions retard organization's motivation efforts. Again, the study reasons that, motivation will be effective if measures it suggests will be complied by organizations.

Key words: *Misconception, Motivation*

1. Introduction

Motivation is an inner desire of an individual to accomplish something due to the diverse needs. It is the reasons underlying behavior and a continuous process (Guay *et al.*, 2010). This implies that fulfilling one need or desire does not mark the end rather mark the start point of another need thus creating a continuous chain. In any organization, an employee possesses own desired objective in which he/she tends to strive to achieve. Failure to that, leads to dissatisfaction but when one attains the planned objectives he/she becomes satisfied and thus motivated to stay longer with the organization (Kondalkar, 2007).

According to a study by Grant (2008), motivation imposes employees' outcomes for instance performance and productivity. The study established that, motivated employees are more oriented towards autonomy and are more self-driven in contrast to less motivated employees. Further, motivated employees are highly engaged and involved in their jobs and are more willing to take responsibilities (Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2009). These and other motivational studies stipulate the importance of employees' motivation in any organization.

However, the way of motivating employees has been subject to various perspectives. The question has been what package works well to employees and if there are some employees who can never be motivated at all. In this aspect, motivating employees find itself in the middle of one of the following conceptions; as to whether employees are only intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, if money is the only factor for motivation, if some employees can never be motivated at all and if employees are motivated by a single package (one size fits all).

These conceptions have been resulting into motivation misconceptions in trying to apply them and therefore retarding the efforts of organizations to motivate employees. The study assesses the mentioned misconceptions and at the end corrections are recommended for better employees' motivation practices.

2. Literature Review of Misconceptions on Motivation

There have been diverse arguments as far as motivation is concerned resulting in to critical misconceptions as provided below.

Misconception on extrinsic and intrinsic motivation

True worshipers of extrinsic motivation conception argue that, motivation consists of external factors that can necessitate employees' satisfaction and increase productivity. For that matter, they rely much on external packages/forces. They render that such factors are powerful to all organization employees and can influence their performance. In this scene, they worship factors such as salaries, job security, working conditions and quality of supervision. Hence, they assume that individuals are motivated extrinsically than intrinsically and forces mentioned satisfy employees (Amabile, 1993). However, this has been rated as misconception on motivation. The conception has been criticized by Herzberg (2003) in his Two-Factor Theory of Motivation where he rated such factors as dissatisfiers in a sense that they yield no motivation though their absence may dissatisfy employees. Additionally, such conception has been acted against by Morse (2003) in his work of "Chip health's intrinsic and extrinsic rewards" whereby the study concluded that, the bias exists in extrinsic motivation. In this aspect, Morse (2003) added that, some will be extrinsically motivated while others not.

Concerning intrinsic motivation, believers of this idea provide that, employees are mostly intrinsically motivated than extrinsic (Jones and George, 2003). They believe that, there are some inner factors within the mind of employees that act as a source of motivation to them. However, their belief results into misconception as not all employees are intrinsically motivated. This argument is supported by Koontz (1980) who opined that, motivation is a general term applying to the entire class of drives, desires, needs, wishes and similar forces.

Money and Motivation

Scholars and organizational practitioners have been conceiving motivation by relating it with money alone. Believers of this conception contend that, money is the main factor for enhancing motivation in organizations. They focus on attracting employees with good compensation packages and other financial benefits believing that, they will be motivated to struggle in achieving the organization goals (Shanks, 2007).

Albeit managers and organization practitioners accolade money as a substantial factor for motivation, those who conceive it as a misconception anticipate that, money motivates only to a point. For example, when compensation is not high enough or is considered to be inequitable, it becomes a de motivator. The assessment of this argument is supported by Frederick Herzberg (2003) in his Two Factor Theory of motivation where he grouped money among dissatisfiers. Also, it is supported by Hay Group study (1999), where 500,000 employees ranked fair pay and benefits as the least ten important motivating factors that keep them committed and staying with their companies. Drawing from such assessment they reason that money alone cannot motivate employees.

Some employees are not motivated at all

Again, there has been misconception that, some employees in organizations are not motivated at all. Believers of this misconception argue that, despite the application of several packages for motivating employees, some never get motivated at all. However, Manion (2005) believe that, everyone is motivated by something. Arguably, each employee has a possibility of being

motivated by a certain thing. The problem with managers is that, packages they use may not be direct towards the job. For that matter, managers must try to understand what motivate an employee in what job. This is because everyone has something that can motivate him or her.

One size fits all

Moreover, there is misconception about one way of rewarding and recognizing employees. In this misconception managers believes that, one size fits all employees in rewarding and recognizing them. The problem with this misconception is that, it refuses to acknowledge individual differences and group all employees together into a homogenous group. It is important to note that, individuals have different motives, and may act in different ways and be motivated by different aspects. Atchison (2003) provides that, to end this misconception, managers need to consider preferences when planning to motivate employees in order to improve effectiveness.

3. Methodology

3.1 The study area

The study was conducted at the Local Government Training Institute. Local Government Training Institute (LGTI) is a higher learning institution offering training, research and consultancy in local Government administration. The Institute is located in Dodoma city, Tanzania. The study collected data from four academic departments Institute which include; Department of Human Resources Management, Department of Local Government Administration and Management, Department of Accounts and Finance and Department of Community Development.

3.2 Data collection

The study used self-administered questionnaire method in the collection of data. Questionnaires were prepared and delivered to respondents who were given time to respond to the question asked. Respondents were randomly selected from each of the four academic departments of Local Government Training Institute. The list of employees found in each department was established comprising eighty (80) employees and each name on the list was assigned numbers such as 1, 2, 4, 5,,,,, N =32 (1...N) then selected randomly. This resulted into a total of thirty two (32) respondents that was used as a sample size.

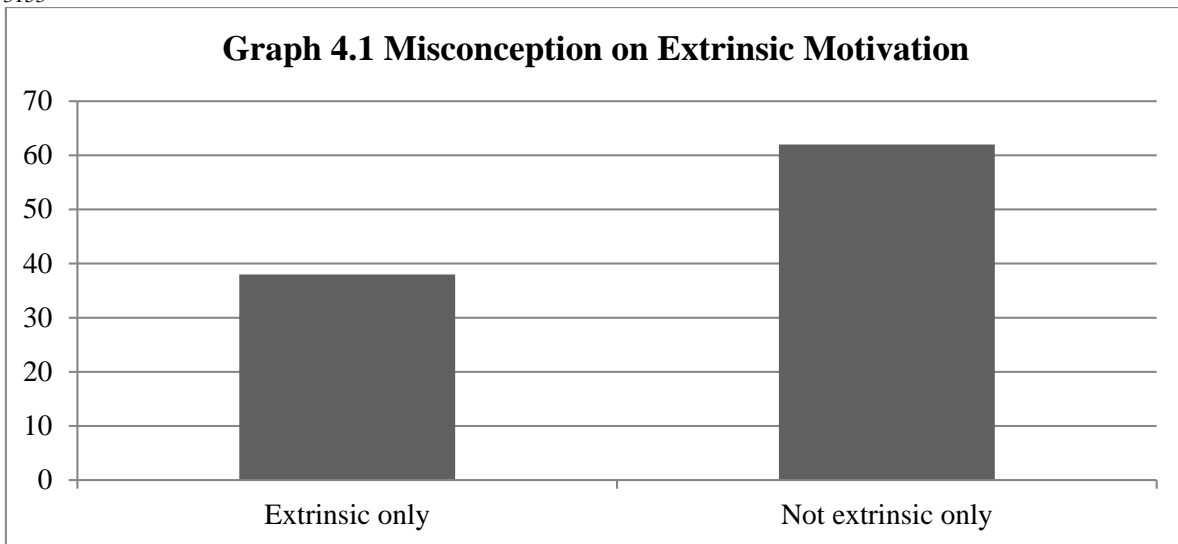
3.3 Data analysis and presentation

Collected data were cleaned, coded and summarized in a more understandable way. The data were analysed using the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 computer program for windows as the study involved the collection of quantitative data. Graphs and tables were used to present the findings.

4. Results of the study

4.1 Misconception on Extrinsic Motivation

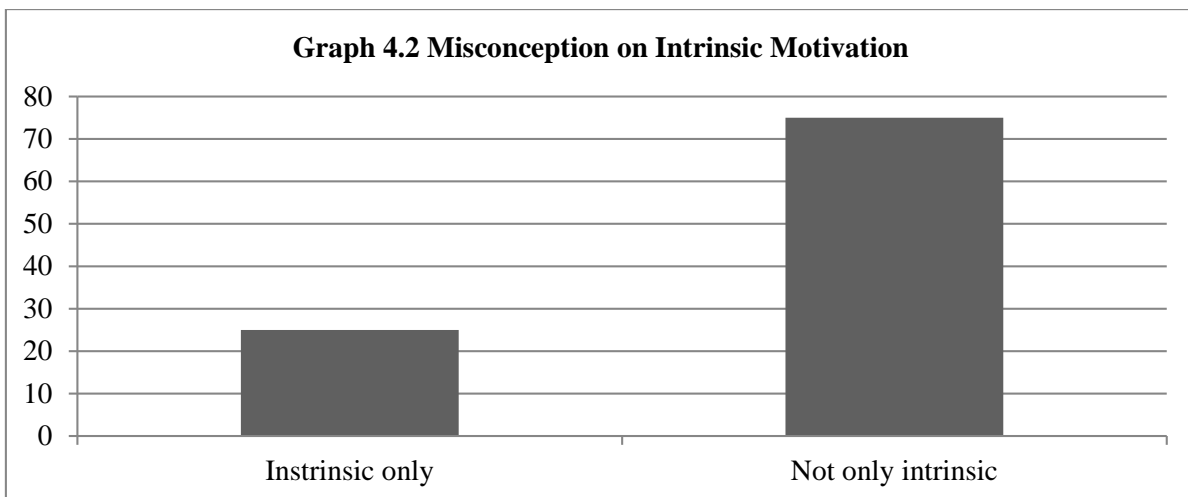
In this part, the aim was finding out if employees were extrinsically motivated only. Result of the findings revealed that twenty (20) respondents that is equivalent to 62% showed that employees are not motivated by extrinsic packages only and twelve (12) respondents that is equivalent to 38% revealed that extrinsic packages are the only packages that works in motivating employees. The result of the findings imply that majority of employees are not only motivated by extrinsic packages. The results are elaborated more in graph 4.1 below.



Source: Field Data (2019)

4.2 Misconception on Intrinsic Motivation

This part aimed to find out as to whether intrinsic motivation was the only source of motivating employees in the organization. The result of the findings revealed that twenty four (24) respondents that is equivalent 75% provided that intrinsic motivation was not the only source of motivating employees in the organization and eight (8) respondents that is equivalent to 25% revealed that intrinsic motivation was the only way of motivating employees in the organization. Thus, the result implies that, intrinsic motivation cannot be considered as the only source of motivation to employees therefore lacking complete relationship between employees motivation and intrinsic packages as graph 4.2 provides below.

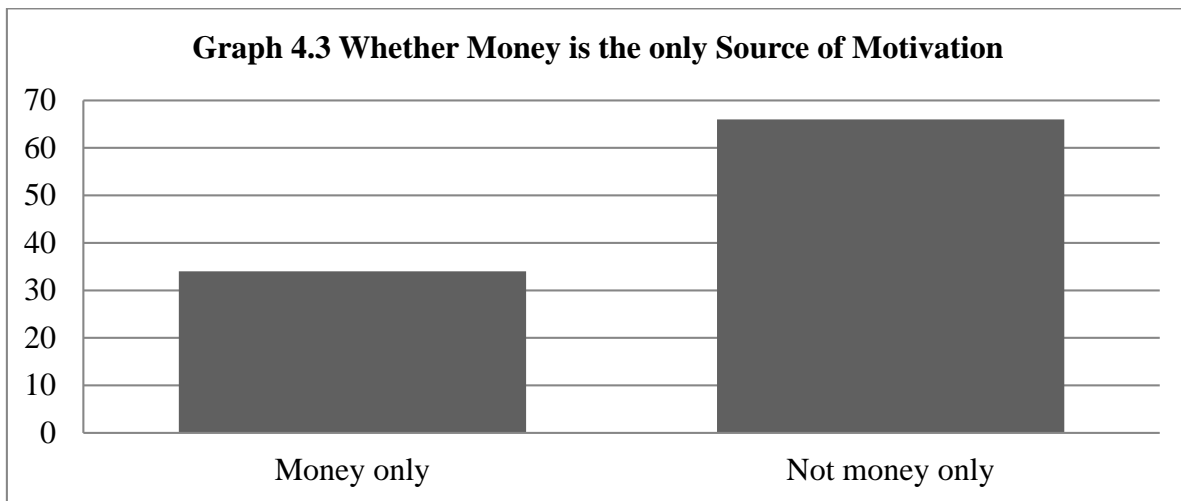


Source: Field Data (2019)

4.3 Whether Money is the only source of motivation

The aim of this part was to find out whether money was the only source of motivating employees in organizations. Respondents were asked to rate if money was the only way of motivating employees. The result of the findings revealed that twenty one (21) respondents that is equivalent to 66% provided that money was not the only source of motivating employees in organizations and eleven (11) respondents that is equivalent to 34% revealed that money was the only source of motivating employees in

organizations below. In this aspect, the result of the findings reveals that money is not the only considerate force of motivating employees in organizations as graph 4.3 shows.



Source: Field Data (2019)

However, respondents were asked to mention the other ways of motivating employees apart from money that they knew. Most of respondents mentioned recognition, achievement, involvement in organization decision making, organization dinner, shaking hands with supervisors, career advancement, employee’s birthday, employee appreciation day, employment milestone, project achievement and organization’s anniversary as other ways that can be used to motivate employees in organizations.

4.4 Whether there are employees who are not motivated at all

In this misconception, the aim was to find out if there are employees who are not motivated at all. The results of the findings revealed that thirty (30) respondents that is equivalent to 94% provided that it is not true that there are employees who are not motivated at all and two (2) respondents that is equivalent to 6% provided that they were not aware as if there were employees who are not motivated at all. The results of the findings imply that almost all employees are motivated by a certain package as table 4.4 provides below.

Table 4.4 Whether there are employees who are not motivated at all

Whether there are employees who not Motivated at all	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Not true	30	94%
Not aware	2	6%
Total	32	100%

Source: Field Data (2019)

4.5 Misconception on if all employees can be motivated by a single package (one size fit all)

The study aimed to find out as to whether all employees can be motivated by a single package. The results of the findings revealed that twenty six (26) respondents which is equivalent to 81% did not agree the fact that single package can motivate all employees compared to six (6) respondents that is equivalent to 19% who agreed that all employees can be motivated by a single package. The result of the findings implies that all employees cannot be motivated by a single package as table 4.5 shows below.

Table 4.2 Misconception on if all employees can be motivated by a single package

If all employees can be motivated by a single package	Respondents	Percentage
Agree	6	19%
Not agree	26	81%
Total	32	100%

Source: Field Data (2019)

5. Discussion of the findings

The discussion is centered on the results of the findings revealed above as far as misconceptions on motivation are concerned. The discussion aimed at correcting the following misconceptions; (a) whether employees are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated (b) if money is the only source of motivating employees (c) whether if there are employees who are not motivated at all and (d) if a single package can motivate all employees.

(a) Whether employees are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated

Management scholars have been in a big discussion on whether employees are intrinsically or extrinsically motivated. Some believes that intrinsic motivation is the only way that managers should focus to practice in motivating its workforce while others believe that extrinsic motivation including good salary, contingency pay, employees benefits are the main source of motivation. In this aspect, organizational managers have been focusing on what they believe on their side intrinsically or extrinsically to motivate employees.

Believers of intrinsic motivation praise that inner drivers will lead to motivation of employees and therefore they just focus on internal motivation. The result of the findings shows that 75% of respondents provided that, intrinsic motivation is not the only source of motivating employees. In other words, believing that only internal factors will lead to motivation is the wrong conception as far as motivation is concerned. That is to say, internal drivers such as recognition, appreciation, achievement or increased job responsibility cannot be relied upon as the only way of motivating employees in the organization.

The result of the findings is supported by Koontz (1980) who opine that, motivation is a general term applying to the entire class of drives, desires, needs, wishes and similar forces. The entire class of drives and other sources implies other sources than intrinsic forces.

Again, the study shows that, 62% of respondents provided that extrinsic motivation factors cannot be regarded as the only source of motivating employees in the organization. The extrinsic factors can include salary, company policies, leadership style and other contingent pays. That being the case, praising that the mentioned factors above and the related ones are the only factors that motivates employees is the wrong conception when relying to the study findings. That is to say, not all employees in the organization will be motivated by extrinsic forces because there are those who are intrinsically motivated.

The result of the findings is also supported by Morse (2003) who concluded that there is bias in extrinsic motivation hence such packages cannot be considered as main aspect for motivating employees. Again, Herzberg in his Two Factor Theory (2003) rated extrinsic factors that their presence does not motivate because it yields to dissatisfaction though their absence may dissatisfy employees.

In this aspect, relying only on intrinsic or extrinsic sources of motivation may jeopardize the achievement of motivation aims. Internal and external sources of motivation should run concurrently. They must be practiced at the same time if managers are to motivate employees fairly and equitably. Relying on one source can motivate some employees and demotivate others who do not believe in the particular source. Management practitioners need to consider using both sources in motivating employees in order to achieve organizational pre-determined objectives. However, despite the fact that both intrinsic and extrinsic sources must be used to motivate employees, managers must be keen to understand which source motivates who.

(b) If money is the only means of motivating employees

Believers of this misconception provide that, money is the soul of motivating employees in the organization. They believe that, employees are motivated by cash more than anything else. They praise attractive salary, financial benefits and contingent pays. That is to say they find and design any financial means to motivate employees.

However, the result of the findings revealed that 66% of respondents rated that money was not the only way of motivating employees in the organization. This entails that, not all employees can be motivated by money. Most organizations today are focusing on attracting, retaining and motivating employees using attractive financial packages however; submitting that money will motivate all employees is the wrong conception. The argument is supported by Hay Group studies (1999) who provided that employees used in their study mentioned pay (money) in the ten least motivating factors. Some employees are motivated by non-financial means such as recognition, shaking hands with supervisors, career advancement, employee's birthday, employee appreciation day, employment milestone, project achievement and organization's anniversary as respondents provided in this study.

Furthermore, submitting that money is the only means of motivating employees for better organizational performance is the wrong conception as some organization scholars believes that money does not motivate but their absence dissatisfies employees. Herzberg (2003) in his Two Factor Theory listed salary in a group of factors that does not satisfy employees in organization.

That being the case, money can motivate some employees in the organization but must not be relied as the only way of motivation. Therefore Managers need to rethink about how they treat money as the means of motivating employees.

(c) Whether if there are employees who are not motivated at all

Misconception on whether some employees are never motivated at all has been proven against by the results of the findings which have provided that each employee is motivated by a certain package. Large number of respondents in this study identified that each employee is motivated to a certain package. The results of the findings showed that 94% of respondents revealed so; this is supported by Manion (2005) who believes that, everyone is motivated by something.

The challenging task to managers is to identify each employee is motivated by what package. In this aspect, the study has resolved this misconception by proving that each employee is motivated by a certain package and therefore it is significant for managers to investigate what package motivate who for the aim of improving organizational productivity.

(d) Whether all employees are motivated by a single package

The result of the findings revealed that believing one size fits all is a wrong conception when it comes to employees' motivation as 81% of the respondents used in this study submitted that, single package cannot motivate all employees. The result is supported by Atchison (2003) who opines for managers to have a plan on motivating employees rather than focusing on as single package believing that it will yield to motivation for all.

In this aspect, management practitioners need to be aware and consider investigating employees to find out each is motivated by what package. This will help the organization in effectuating employee's performance as the size that fit each employee will be identified; thus motivation impacting the achievement of organization goals.

6. Conclusion

Admittedly, motivating employees is a contemporary agenda in management as employees today are very selective to the organization they join. Most of them join organizations that motivate and recognize them as an important resource. For an organization to become the best choice of employees, they need to be aware of important tips of motivating employees. No doubt those misconceptions discussed retards organization motivation efforts. All packages are important for employees' motivation and should be considered equally in application. Therefore, organizations should consider the result of the findings provided in this study for better application of motivation packages hence becoming the best employee's choice.

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