

Exploring the Relationship between Employee Motivation and Job Performance Insight from Terengganu State Sport Council Employees

Nur Dalilah Dahlan, Mohamad Firdaus Ahmad*, Nur Syazwani Zulaikha Safwan, Nur Hani Syazwani Bakri, Muhammad Wafi A. Rahman

Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation, University Technology MARA, Cadangan Negeri Sembilan, Campus Seremban, Malaysia

*Corresponding author

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2024.8120081>

Received: 12 November 2024; Accepted: 03 December 2024; Published: 03 January 2025

ABSTRACT

Motivation among employees is a major issue that significantly has an impact on job performance and organizational success. Motivated employees tend to demonstrate higher productivity and engagement levels in their roles. Thus, this study explored the relationship between employee motivation and job performance in Terengganu State Sports Council (MSNT). The research employed a quantitative design and involved distributing a questionnaire containing 61 items that assessed motivation and job performance to 113 employees in Terengganu State Sports Council (MSNT). The findings revealed a clear and positive association between employee motivation and job performance. In other words, employees who are motivated to do their jobs perform better in their jobs. Consequently, the results of this study can be utilized to enhance employee well-being, guide future research, and inform human resource planning and development. Examining the impact of organizational culture on employee motivation and job performance could provide valuable insights for managers and leaders seeking to create high-performing teams and organizations.

Keywords: Employee Motivation, Job Performance, Sports Organization, MSNT Employees

INTRODUCTION

Employee motivation is viewed as the driving force behind employees' achievement of the specific goals and objectives of the organization. The success of any corporation or organization depends mainly on employee motivation. Motivation is the key to building and facilitating an atmosphere that provides excellent results. This leads to the question of how we can guarantee that the morale of the employee is at its highest point in the organization. Each employee is motivated and encouraged to work hard by his or her own personal reward, and others are driven by appreciation, such as financial incentives. According to Raine (2022), incentives are key to promoting motivation and engagement among employees as an employer. Employee reward programmers go a long way to ensure that workers feel cared about and valued. This will contribute significantly to the overall motivation of employees. Motivation encourages productive efficiency and tells workers how much they care for. The most significant effect of motivation for workers is increased performance or productivity. Employee motivation fosters unity in the workplace and improves staff efficiency.

It is important to the company's long-term advantages. Based on Nguyen, C. (2020), motivated employees mean staff retention and commitment to businesses, which will generate growth and business development in the short term. For the development, growth, and success of every business organization, employee motivation is very important, whether small or large. All companies are currently driven by their value in their workplaces. Managers assume that their continuing business success depends upon recruiting and retaining workers, so embracing it is desperately important. Lokman et al. (2022) agreed that motivation refers to forces within or outside an individual who excites and maintains a commitment to action. The performance of employees depends on the following factors: performance assessment, motivation for employees, satisfaction

and compensation of employees, training and growth, safety at work, and organizational structure. Managers must create an environment that enhances the efficiency of the workers in the organization to induce proper Behaviour. According to Alam et al. (2020), for the manager to be highly motivated, the welfare package should be attractive for the workers so that the working environment is sufficient. Basalamah, S. A. (2021) show that the motivation of individual workers is a significant factor in achieving a high level of satisfaction. Employees form the human capital of organizations, and their performance can significantly influence organizational success or failure (Nguyen et al., 2020).

According to Riyanto et al. (2021), the factors that affect employee performance are the working environment, motivation, personal problems, and training. Motivating the employees means supporting them in attaining organizational goals by rewarding them. Motivation is an emotional function which inspires a worker to achieve a desired purpose. Employee job performance is crucial for Terengganu State Sports Council (MSNT) as it directly impacts the overall performance in higher education. As highlighted by Anwar et al. (2021), the standards for employee performance are designed by the administration to measure organizational effectiveness. This is widely recognized as the cornerstone of MSNT, ensuring the successful and efficient implementation of its approaches and programs. Employee quality significantly influences performance, making highly motivated individuals more likely to succeed. In the higher education sector, job performance is a primary concern for administrators and academics, as a decrease in employee motivation can lead to a decline in performance levels (Szromek et al., 2020). Moreover, administrators in higher education institutions, including MSNT, often grapple with understanding the factors that impact employee performance. Consequently, there remains a lack of sufficient empirical data to guide efforts aimed at enhancing overall job performance among employees.

Problem Statement

While there is a substantial body of research on employee motivation and job performance in the industrial and academic sectors, there is a lack of studies examining these factors, specifically within the sports industry. The unique nature of sports organizations, with their strong team and organizational identities, may lead to distinct factors influencing employee motivation and job performance compared to other sectors. The higher the motivation, the higher the job performance of employees in any organization (Hajjali et al., 2022). Employees who perceive themselves as less competent for the task may either leave the field altogether, or their productivity levels are likely to be suboptimal if they stay. To address this gap, there is a need for more targeted research on the drivers of job satisfaction, motivation, and performance among a diverse range of employees within sports organizations. Understanding the unique factors that shape the work experiences and attitudes of sports industry employees can inform more effective human resource management practices and ultimately improve organizational outcomes in this dynamic sector. Therefore, this study focused on identifying motivation factors among employees at MSNT. Furthermore, Arifin et al. (2021) stated that the work performance of one of the oil palm plantations in Malaysia showed that stress, pay, work conditions, and workload had effects on the work performance of oil palm plant workers in Malaya. Thus, this study aimed to identify the relationship between employee motivations and job performance among employees in Terengganu State Sports Council (MSNT).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivation is the enthusiasm and commitment of an employee to work-related activities. According to Ali and Anwar (2021), motivation is the force through which an individual chooses to act. Managers often fail to recognize the value of motivation in the achievement of their core goals and dreams. The fundamentals of motivation are critical to be understood to provide a workplace that can motivate employees. Motivation for employees is a process in which one person is prepared to meet his or her needs. Individual requirements can be considered in terms of survival needs, security, culture, esteem and self-assessment.

The person will perform boosters in his or her work output simply by this requirement. Their clients, salaries, or others may work. Tovmasyan and Minasyan (2020) said that motivated workers are more likely to succeed than unmotivated citizens. The employee can perform his or her job in the greatest possible way if the employee is comfortable and satisfied. Riyanto et al. (2021) stated that the study shows that the motivation of

employees is directly affecting profitability and growth. A strongly engaged person tries their hardest to perform all facets of his roles and obligations. Improved employee performance improved the value of the company and the productivity of the employee. Ali and Anwar (2021) stated that to improve effectiveness and performance, it is important to address several issues, including increasing the motivation of employees, making them happy with their jobs, and improving the overall welfare of their employees. This indicates that motivated persons are more focused on their goals because they are aware of their aspirations. According to Ali and Anwar (2021), when workers are motivated, their ability to increase productivity will be high.

Several factors must be addressed to enhance work effectiveness and performance, including boosting employee motivation, ensuring job satisfaction, and promoting overall job-related well-being (Davidescu et al., 2020). Motivation plays a crucial role in guiding individuals towards specific goals, dictating how they channel their efforts to achieve them (Kumar, 2024). This implies that motivated individuals are well-suited to pursue their goals because they understand the requirements. Consequently, when employees are motivated, their productivity increases significantly (Riyanto et al., 2021). Motivating employees is a policy that managers implement to enhance effective job performance among employees in organizations (Al-Jedaia & Mehrez, 2020). This is supported by Gangwar et al. (2022), whose theories, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, highlight that motivated employees are more inclined to perform effectively. When both intrinsic needs (like recognition) and extrinsic needs (such as salary) are satisfied, employees typically show improved performance.

Furthermore, competent assessment and feedback are essential at the postgraduate level for improving student performance. Assessments help evaluate students' depth of knowledge and research abilities, while feedback provides the necessary guidance to refine their academic skills. By offering constructive, timely, and detailed feedback, supervisors can help students excel academically, develop critical research skills, and build the confidence to contribute meaningfully to their academic fields (Rigopoulos, 2022). This continuous feedback also directly impacts the dissertation process. Competent feedback serves as a scaffold, helping students navigate the complexities of their research with more ease. When students feel supported and receive consistent feedback, they are less likely to feel overwhelmed, which directly contributes to greater satisfaction with the overall postgraduate experience (Turhan & Karadağ, 2019).

Effective organization and management practices are essential in creating a conducive environment to utilise educational facilities optimally. Research indicates that effective supervision and good management significantly impact students' overall satisfaction, and positive learning outcomes (Stone, 2008; Zeng et al., 2013). Moreover, the study on Mauritian students abroad highlights the importance of various management aspects, such as effective usage of campus resources, to maximize the impact of satisfaction rating and address the differential needs of students. (Ammigan, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study used a questionnaire survey to examine the relationship between employee motivations and job performance among employees in Terengganu State Sports Council (MSNT). The insights obtained from this study can directly influence management practices at MSNT, enhancing employee engagement and performance, which is vital for reaching organizational objectives. Furthermore, the sports sector often involves unique motivational factors, such as teamwork, personal achievement, and competition. Examining employees in this context can provide insights specific to the dynamics of sports organizations. The researcher conducted a pilot study involving 30 employees to evaluate the questionnaire item's validity and reliability. This preliminary study was essential to ensure questionnaire consistency, as measured by Cronbach's alpha value. The reliability assessment was based on the interpretation of Cronbach's alpha according to Chua's (2006) guidelines. The pilot study results facilitated the adjustments required before the full-scale questionnaire distribution. An actual study consisting of 113 questionnaires was distributed to staff at MSNT. This questionnaire consists of 3 sections: Section A, Section B, and Section C. Section A asks about the demographic profile of respondents, consisting of 3 items. Section B represents motivation across 5 dimensions: pay, appreciation, training, expectancy, and knowledge transfer. Section C covers stress, encompassing the working environment, workload, and salary across 4 dimensions. Each section utilizes a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, and includes a few items. All collected

data were analyzed using Pearson correlation.

FINDINGS

Pearson's analysis examined a relationship between employee motivation and job performance among MSNT employees. The analysis revealed a significant and positive correlation between employee motivation and job performance ($r=.79$, $p < 0.05$). This finding suggests that when employees experience higher levels of motivation, their job performance will also increase. In other words, a positive and fulfilling work motivation may increase job performance among employees.

TABLE I Relationship between Employee Motivation and Job Performance

Variable	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
Job Performance ↔ Employee Motivation	.796**	0	113

The research conducted on MSNT employees revealed a significant and positive relationship between employee motivation and job performance. This finding aligns with a previous study conducted by Ali and Anwar (2021), which similarly highlighted a significant correlation between employee motivation and job performance. Motivation is critical for enhancing employee efficiency and job satisfaction and can elevate individual and organizational capabilities. These results suggest that employees at MSNT experience higher levels of motivation, which enhances job performance and contributes to their retention within the organization. When employees feel content and satisfied with their work, they typically show increased dedication, loyalty, and attachment to the company, reducing their inclination to seek other job opportunities. This idea is supported by Fadhila and Sulistiyani (2021), who stated that dedicated employees often demonstrate loyalty to organizations that foster a secure and positive working environment.

When employees' motivation is fulfilled, and they feel content with their work, it can be inferred that they are less likely to leave the organization. Conversely, if employees' motivation remains low, their intention to leave the organization is more likely to increase. These findings are consistent with previous studies by da Cruz Carvalho et al. (2020), which also identified a positive relationship between employee motivation and organisational job performance. The research underscores the importance of motivational and satisfying factors and factors contributing to continuous improvement, which can have a long-term impact on the organization's most critical resource—creating and maintaining uniqueness and sustaining competitive advantage. This study's findings emphasise employee motivation's critical role in improving job performance at the Terengganu State Sports Council (MSNT). The significant positive relationship indicates that job performance also increases as motivation rises, contributing to higher employee retention. This underscores the necessity of cultivating a work environment that promotes motivation, satisfaction, and engagement.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings from this study underscore the critical role of motivation in enhancing job performance among employees at the Terengganu State Sports Council (MSNT). A significant positive relationship between motivation and job performance suggests that motivated employees perform better, benefitting individual and organizational success. Practically, MSNT management could implement motivational strategies, like rewards and professional development opportunities, to foster a more engaged and productive workforce. These strategies would support long-term employee retention, contributing to sustained organizational growth and

performance in the sports sector. Therefore, future research should explore additional factors, such as leadership style and organizational culture, that may further influence this relationship in order to provide comparative insights and strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

REFERENCES

1. Anwar, G., & Abdullah, N. N. (2021). The impact of Human resource management practice on Organizational performance. *International journal of Engineering, Business and Management (IJEEM)*, 5.
2. Alam, M. N., Hassan, M. M., Bowyer, D., & Reaz, M. (2020). The effects of wages and welfare facilities on employee productivity: Mediating role of employee work motivation. *Australasian Accounting, Business and Finance Journal*, 14(4), 38-60.
3. Ali, B. J., & Anwar, G. (2021). An empirical study of employees' motivation and its influence job satisfaction. Ali, BJ, & Anwar, G. (2021). An Empirical Study of Employees' Motivation and its Influence Job Satisfaction. *International Journal of Engineering, Business and Management*, 5(2), 21-30.
4. Al-Jedaia, Y., & Mehrez, A. (2020). The effect of performance appraisal on job performance in governmental sector: The mediating role of motivation. *Management science letters*, 10(9), 2077-2088.
5. Arifin, A., Taib, H. M., Aman, Z., & Rahim, A. R. A. (2021). Factors influencing turnover intention among Malaysian unskilled workers in oil palm plantation. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 6(9), 374-381.
6. Basalamah, S. A. (2021). The role of work motivation and work environment in improving job satisfaction. *Golden Ratio of Human Resource Management*, 1(2), 94-103.
7. Chua, Y.P (2006a). Book 1 - Research Methods and Statistic; Research Method. Shah Alam, Malaysia: McgrawHill Education.
8. da Cruz Carvalho, A., Riana, I. G., & Soares, A. D. C. (2020). Motivation on job satisfaction and employee performance. *International research journal of management, IT and social sciences*, 7(5), 13-23.
9. Davidescu, A. A., Apostu, S. A., Paul, A., & Casneau, I. (2020). Work flexibility, job satisfaction, and job performance among Romanian employees Implications for sustainable human resource management. *Sustainability*, 12(15), 6086.
10. Fadhila, N., & Sulistiyani, E. (2021). The influence of motivation, working environment and career development toward employees' loyalty. *AFEBI Management and Business Review*, 6(2), 140-148.
11. Gangwar, N., Debnath, B., Roopa, K. V., Sambargi, S., & Hegde, S. R. (2022). Employees locked at home: Revisiting motivation theory-An analytical study. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 6(3), 9860-9878.
12. Hajjali, I., Kessi, A. M. F., Budiandriani, B., Prihatin, E., & Sufri, M. M. (2022). Determination of work motivation, leadership style, employee competence on job satisfaction and employee performance. *Golden Ratio of Human Resource Management*, 2(1), 57-69.
13. Kumar, D. (2024). OCBs During COVID-19 Pandemic Scenario: A Survey of Selected Indian Companies Debleena Kumar and Amit Majumder. *Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) in India: Emerging Trends and Future Directions*, 1.
14. Nguyen, P. T., Yandi, A., & Mahapatra, M. R. (2020). Factors that influence employee performance: motivation, leadership, environment, culture organization, work achievement, competence and compensation (A study of human resource management literature studies). *Dinasti International Journal of Digital Business Management*, 1(4), 645-662.
15. Nguyen, C. (2020). The impact of training and development, job satisfaction and job performance on young employee retention. *Job Satisfaction and Job Performance on Young Employee Retention* (May 1, 2020).
16. Lokman, A., Hassan, F., Ustadi, Y. A., Rahman, F. A. A., Zain, Z. M., & Rahmat, N. H. (2022). Investigating motivation for learning via Vroom's Theory. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(1), 504-530.
17. Raine, O. A. (2022). The Influence of Low Wage Compensation on Employee Motivation in an Institution of Higher Education: A Qualitative Exploratory Case Study (Doctoral dissertation,

Northcentral University).

18. Ritala, P., Vanhala, M., & Järveläinen, K. (2020). The role of employee incentives and motivation on organisational innovativeness in different organisational cultures. *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 24(04), 2050075.
19. Riyanto, S., Endri, E., & Herlisha, N. (2021). Effect of work motivation and job satisfaction on employee performance: Mediating role of employee engagement. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 19(3), 162.
20. Szromek, A. R., & Wolniak, R. (2020). Job satisfaction and problems among academic staff in higher education. *Sustainability*, 12(12), 4865.
21. Tovmasyan, G., & Minasyan, D. (2020). The Impact of Motivation on Work Efficiency for Both Employers. *Business Ethics and Leadership*, 4(3).