

## **AUTONOMOUS MOTIVATION AMONG EMPLOYEES OF PUBLIC SECTOR MEDICAL UNIVERSITY: THE ROLE OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

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### **Abstract**

To determine employee autonomous motivation and find out the effect of age and Gender on autonomous motivation among employees working in public sector medical university, Karachi. A Cross sectional study design was used to conduct this study among employees of public sector medical university. The duration of the study was three months. Sample size of the study was 384. Response rate was 78%, 300 out of 384 duly filled questionnaires were collected. A probability random sampling technique was used to collect data. SPSS software was applied to analyze the collected data. Mean  $\pm$ SD and % & *n* were explored for Quantitative and Qualitative variables, respectively. T-Test and one-way ANOVA were applied to test hypotheses. P-Value <0.05 was considered significant. 59.3% (*n*=178) were males. 46% (*n*=138) were females in age between 25 to 31 years. 53.7 % (*n*=161) respondent reported their marital status single. Mean age of the respondents was 30.16 $\pm$ 7.03. Factors that motivate employees included salary (34%), positive feedback (26.3%), felt very proud when did well at work (52%), learnt new things (57.7%), had a feeling of accomplishment (35.3%), Solving work issues made them feel important (26.7%), felt guilty if didn't accomplish job-related task (45.3%). The t-test and ANOVA revealed significant effect of gender; *t* (298) = -2.81, *p*-value = 0.005, CI [-3.77, -0.66] and age; *F* (5,294) = 2.56, *p*-Value = 0.027 on employees' autonomous motivation. It was observed proven that there was a significant effect of gender and age on employee's autonomous motivation.

**Keywords:** Age, Gender, Autonomous motivation, Public Sector, Medical University

### **Introduction**

The present-day world offers various challenges to organizations in order to acquire sustainable place in the market and to set into the prevalent conditions. During the recent few decades, human intellect and skills have overwhelmingly got over physical techniques. Like advancement in various fields of life and testing productivity, several



methods and techniques have been introduced to assess proficiency and productivity of employees in organizations. This provides organizations to offer suitable reward to high performers. This refers that strong relationship of mutual trust and faith between an organization and its employees can prove highly effective and profitable (Maduka, & Okafor, 2014). In the recent times, motivation factor has been found as a very instrumental and effective tool to be used by managers for influencing their employees to give effective performance and productivity (Gravetter & Forzano, 2018).

At workplace, employees usually decline to fully accept rules. They happen to have uncertainties about the rules when they compare these to their intrinsic feelings and needs which they prefer over these rules and company norms. The rules and procedures, being external forces, create tension, conflict and dependence among employees. In such scenario, they have to work to meet the demands of their regulations, target given by the management or to show up as efficient employee. This kind of performance is carried out as a duty the performance of which may prove their self-worth to the organization. The external regulations and consequent pressures lower the performance level of employees, decrease their creativity, develop psychological issues and even drive them to excessive use of alcohol and use of drug as well (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Gagne & Deci, 2005; Deci, Ryan, Gagne, Leone, Usunov & Kornazheva, 2001).

In the field of management, business and marketing, sports, health, education, leadership and entertainment and numerous other areas, systematic research endeavors have been made on large scale. It is found that the self-determination theory is largely appreciated among managers, educators and scholars by virtue of its firm views and promising outcomes (Deci, Ryan, Gagne, Leone, Usunov & Kornazheva, 2001). According to Baard, Deci, and Ryan (2004) two research studies of large American banks reveal that employees performed their jobs better when they received autonomy support from their supervisors and managers, and this support made these employees feel satisfaction of their needs at work. These employees also reported reduced depression and anxiety as compared to other employees. Psychological and physical benefits through satisfaction of the core needs of employees are not confined to business organizations alone. Rather, these benefits extend to health care sector as well (Williams, G. C., & Deci, 1996).

To quote another instance, in a joint study by two authors together with a number of co-authors, the core needs, that is, competence, autonomy and relatedness were taken up in several small and large companies in capitalist economy like that of the United States, and in centrally planned economy like Bulgaria. According to their study, in organizations where employees' basic psychological wants were supported by their work environment, these employees proved of more efficacy and productivity, and their environment was conducive to their psychological needs, and importantly here the size of company did not matter (Deci, Ryan, Gagne, Leone, Usunov & Kornazheva, 2001).

In a recent study where 1,854 undergraduates from 15 cultures were subjected to research by an international group of researchers, the structures of the former were studied for a comparative analysis. The overall outcomes revealed that basic structures of these undergraduates were consistent despite variances in cultures. However, the objectives

were somewhat different when comparison was made between the participants of poor countries and the rich countries (Grouzet, Kasser, Ahuvia, Dols, Kim, Lau, & Sheldon, 2005).

Past studies suggest that providing rewards to employees through compliance of regulations adds to the external pressures and introjected regulations (Reeve, Jang, Hardre, & Omura 2002; Li-Ping Tang, Kim, & Shin-Hsiung Tang, 2000; Vansteenkiste, Zhou, Lens, & Soenens, 2005). In contrast to that, where employees enjoy autonomy, competence and relatedness, they become internally self-disciplined and regulated without any external coercion. The internal integrated regulations strengthen employees internally and they own the organization and the assignments and responsibilities given to them by the organization. Then following the company rules and procedures becomes a part of their self-determination. Now these employees effectively perform for the objectives, goals and values of the organization since their self-determination, objectives and feelings get consistent with the organization's goals, values and objectives (Ryan, & Deci, 2000).

Attempts to determine the sources and causes of motivation for managers and employees at workplace are considered definitely to support developing comprehension of cultural diversities in terms of variations in aims, objectives, values, satisfaction and employee satisfaction. Surveys and observations propose that the core needs (competence, relatedness and autonomy) are universal in that these needs are transferred in cultures from one generation to the other (Chirkov, Ryan, Kim, & Kaplan, 2003; Vansteenkiste, & Deci, 2003).

### **Research Objective**

There is a lack of researches to determine employee's autonomous motivation working in public sector university, Karachi. The aim of this study was to determine employee's autonomous motivation and find out the effect of age and Gender on employee's autonomous motivation among employees working in public sector hospital Karachi.

### **Hypotheses**

On the basis of literature review authors in this study propose following hypothesis:

- There is a significant difference in male and female autonomous motivation score.
- Autonomous motivation significantly differs among different age group.

### **Literature Review**

According to Burton (2012) motivation inspires individuals to work better and influence others to motivation. It would be relevant to look into different definitions of motivation. Gredler, Broussard and Garrison (2004) relate motivation as the attribute which moves us to do or not to do something. Guay et al (2010) refer motivation as the chief ingredient of behavior.

Deci, Koestner & Ryan (1999), suggests that different researchers offer diversified views about the two types of motivation i.e., intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Ryan and Deci (2000) view intrinsic motivation as the activities performed more for the sake of inherent contentment than other reasons. A person who carries intrinsic motivation develops and exhibits courage to confront challenges and acquired the desired outcomes simply because of inner motivation, and no pressures from outside involve in this sort of motivation. In contrast to this, the extrinsic motivation focuses on outward achievements like earning rewards or other gains (Ryan, & Deci, 2000). Oudeyer and Kaplan (2007) relate that the significance of intrinsic motivation, which is an outcome of passion toward a responsibility, is that it brings satisfaction and happiness.

Motivation theories also support the idea that motivated employees are capable of meeting organizational goals at an increased pace. Theories of motivation have been a topic largely brought under discussions all over the world and numerous joint efforts by organizations have been brought into play. Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan, renowned authors, in their year's long research and scholastic endeavor have set up a theory of human motivation known as self-determination theory (SDT). This theory points to the basic principles that are implied in sustainable motivation (Deci, Koestner & Ryan 1999; Ryan, & Deci, 2000).

The self-determination theory highlights on intrinsic significance of job among managers and employees. This view of motivation is associated to improved performance, particularly where work and conditions of work are multifaceted, challenging and demand inner desire and inspiration (McGraw, 1978). The present time high performance is strongly linked to such intrinsic motivation. This is so, according to the self-determination theory, because human bear three basic psychological needs i.e., competence, relatedness and autonomy. Competence refers to the conviction that one has got the capability to produce valuable results. Relatedness may be termed as the nature of social relationships that cause satisfaction and mutual support among people. Autonomy concerns working with a free choice, independent decision and free will and commitment. Autonomy in this sense rules out reliance on others. When a person performs on the basis of intrinsic motivation, he or she carries a sense and feeling of self-option and also the responsibility for what one is doing, and such person feels himself or herself free of any compulsion by external forces and factors. Even there is no feeling of any coercive controlling from the inner forces. When the above three psychological needs i.e., competence, relatedness and autonomy are there, the resultant motivation is ongoing and durable. The SDT theory terms this durable motivation as autonomous as it is outcome of one's having the realization of self-coupled with sense of willingness and engagement. The organizations and managers, who tend to focus on satisfaction of these basic psychological needs of employees, happen to support autonomous motivation that gives out enhanced productivity and profits (Oudeyer and Kaplan 2007; Deci, Koestner & Ryan 1999; Ryan, & Deci, 2000).

Intrinsic motivation may be termed as another shape and illustration of autonomous motivation. Employees bearing intrinsic motivation work with keenness, joy and concentration. Compared to this, in organizations and workplaces where there is integrated regulation, the employees are likely to fully realize the significance of work

despite the point that they may not find the work interesting (Oudeyer and Kaplan 2007; Ryan, & Deci, 2000). Gagne and Deci (2005) and Gagne et al. (2000) suggest that intrinsic motivation and integrated regulation are associated to keenness of employees toward work efficiently. Baard et al. (2004) and Deci et al. (2001) consider fine standards of psychological health of employees by virtue of such association between integration regulation and intrinsic motivation. Feeling of autonomy motivates employees to such extent that they understand the significance of work as well as value of the rules and procedures of the organization.

Findings of the study suggest that organization's rules, procedures and standards are influenced by placing a focus on the support of the core needs i.e., competence, relatedness and autonomy of the employees. This enables and motivates the employees perform with initiative, interest, efficiency and dedication. The reason behind this improved performance is the fact that when employees feel satisfied and independent, they pay decreased attention to the strictness of procedures and rules. In other words, their interest in good performance overwhelms the impact of rules and procedures of the company. Compared to the motivation through fulfillment of the core needs, where work environment is strict and authoritarian in nature, employees confront a different situation in that they experience least sense of competence, autonomy and relatedness. Employees here feel controlled through strict rules and procedural practices. This state of affairs develops among the employees the need to earn rewards, preferably financial and promotional, while elements of satisfaction, happiness and devotion for work remains far behind in their view (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Ryan & Connell, 1989).

## **Methodology**

Observational Analytical Cross sectional study design was used to conduct this study among employees of public sector medical university. The duration of the study was three months from April to June, 2018. The targeted population of the study was employees of public sector medical university. Sample size was calculated via using formula;  $N = Z^2 p(1-p)/d^2$ , proposed by Danial (1999) for cross sectional study design, where  $Z = 1.96$  at 95% confidence interval,  $p = 0.5$  (Estimated prevalence),  $d = 0.05$  (Level of precision). Sample size of the study was 384. Response rate was 78%, 300 duly filled questionnaires had been received. A probability random sampling technique was used to collect data. All teaching and non-teaching employees of Public Sector medical University who willing to participate, both gender with age above 18 Years were included in this study. Informed consent had been taken prior to data collection. Data were collected via using self-administered Questionnaire. Proper assistance was provided to respondents to filled questionnaire. Questionnaire comprises of two sections. First section consisted of Demographic variables which include Age, Gender, Designation and marital status. Second section included 20 items for Autonomous motivation scale. Respondents reported their responses on 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 representing "Not at All true" to 04 representing "Very True". The internal consistency (Cronbach's Alph) of autonomous motivation scale is = 0.74. The independent variables of the study were Age and Gender. The dependent variable was Employees Autonomous Motivation. SPSS Software used analyzed data and Microsoft Excel was used to design Tables. Mean  $\pm$ SD and percentage as well as frequency were explored for Quantitative and Qualitative variables respectively.

T-Test and one-way ANOVA were used to assess the effect of Gender and Age on employee's autonomous motivation. P-Value <0.05 was considered significant.

### Ethical Consideration

The data for the purpose of this research study was obtained from the respondents on the condition of keeping their privacy, and confidentiality about their identity. To ascertain this aspect and honoring their wish, name of the medical university is not mentioned in the research article. It is confidently hoped that not showing the name of the university will not have any significant impact on the utility of the research study, keeping particularly in view that policy, rules and regulations for public sector universities of the province are at parity.

### Result

Out of 384, 300 dully filled questionnaire had been received which depict 78% response rate. Majority of the respondents, 59.3% (n=178) were male. 46% (n=138) were in age between 25 to 31 years. Employees with the age 32-38Years and 18-24years were 22 % (n=66) and 21.3% (n= 64) respectively. 53.7 % (n=161) respondent reported their marital status single and 45% (n=135) respondent were married as shown in table # 01. Mean age of the respondents were 30.16±7.03.

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>
Gender	Male	59.3	178
	Female	40.7	122
Age	18-24years	21.3	64
	25-31years	46.0	138
	32-38years	22.0	66
	39-45Years	5.0	15
	46-52Years	4.7	14
	53-59Years	1.0	3
Marital Status	single	53.7%	161
	married	45.0%	135
	widow	0.7%	02
	divorced	0.7%	02

Table 2 showed employees responses when they were asked about factors that motivate employees to perform their job, majority of the respondents , 34% reported that they perform their duties because they receives salary, 34% respondent reported because I have to have job, 26.3% reported they perform their job to receive positive feedback from supervisor, 32% respondent reported they perform their responsibility because they scared to loss their job, 45.3%reported they feel ashamed if don't accomplish job-related task, 52% reported feel very proud when do well at work, 46.7% respondent reported they want to understand job better, 57.7% want to learn new things about their job, 47.7% give

importance to do well at their job, 33.3% reported job is fun for them, 43.7% enjoy type of work they do, 50.7% enjoy participating in tasks related to their job, 35.3% reported performing job makes them feel accomplished person, 26.7% respondent reported Solving work issues makes them feel important as a person.

<b>Table 2: Factors that motivate Employees to perform their Job</b>					
<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Not at all true</b>	<b>not very true</b>	<b>sort of true</b>	<b>very true</b>
		% (n)	% (n)	% (n)	% (n)
01.	I do my job because others told me to do	49	19	16	15
02.	doing my job can help me to improve my skills	25.7	39.3	22.7	12.3
03.	I work because I have to have a job	11.7	26.0	28.3	34.0
04.	I do my job because i receive a salary	9.3	14.0	29.0	47.7
05.	I want my supervisor to see me as a good worker	14.3	31.3	28.0	26.3
06.	I will feel bad if I do not have a job	12.3	27.3	28.3	32.0
07.	I will feel ashamed if I don't accomplish my job-related task	9.3	15.0	30.3	45.3
08.	I feel very proud of myself when i do well at work	1.3	22.7	23.7	52.3
09.	I work hard because I want to understand my job better	3.7	19.7	30.0	46.7
10.	it is important for me to know my job	5.0	18.7	32.0	44.3
11.	I want to learn new things about my job	6.7	8.3	27.3	57.7
12.	It is important to me to do well at my job	3.7	16.0	32.7	47.7
13.	My job is fun	13.7	21.3	31.7	33.3
14.	I do my job because i enjoy the type of work I do	11.3	19.7	25.3	43.7
15.	I enjoy participating in tasks related to my job	6.0	15.7	27.7	50.7
16.	I enjoy my job	11.3	21.7	28.7	38.3
17.	I feel that my job is important for representing who i am	12.3	24.0	28.7	35.0
18.	Doing my job makes me feel accomplished person	8.0	21.3	35.3	35.3
19.	My job is important to my sense of who i am	9.0	28.3	30.0	32.7
20.	Solving work issues makes me feel important as person	4.0	20.3	26.7	26.7

The Independent t-test revealed statistically significant effect of Gender on employee's autonomous motivation. There is a significant difference in male and female

autonomous motivation score.  $t(298) = -2.81$ , P-Value = 0.005, CI [-3.77, -0.66]. (Table 03)

	Gender		t	P-Value
	Male	Female		
AM Score			-2.81	0.005
Mean	57.561	59.77		
SD	6.74	6.66		

Analysis of variances revealed significant effect of age on employee's autonomous motivation.  $F(5,294) = 2.56$ , p-Value = 0.027. (Table 04)

	Age in Years						F	P-Value
	18-24	25-31	32-38	39-45	46-52	53-59		
AM score							2.56	0.027
Mean	60.12	58.29	56.74	57.00	61.71	61.00		
SD	6.50	6.63	6.92	6.38	0.146	0.00		

## Discussion

The aim of this study was to determine employees' autonomous motivation and to find out the effect of age and gender on employees' autonomous motivation. Autonomous motivation was selected as a dependent variable because of its importance to enhance employee's engagement, retaining employees and increasing organization productivity. Findings of the study revealed that factors that motivate employees to perform their jobs include salary, positive feedback from supervisor, feeling of accomplishment when they did job well, feeling very proud when did well at work, wanted to understand job better, wanted to learn new things about their job, gave importance to do well at their job, enjoyed type of work they did, felt accomplished when performed their assigned tasks well, solving work issues made them feel important, felt guilty if didn't accomplish job-related task.

Furthermore, Authors in this study assesses the effect of Gender and Age on employee's autonomous motivation. The First hypothesis was  $H_1$ : There is a significant difference in male and female autonomous motivation score. The findings of the study suggested statistically significant effect of gender on employee's autonomous motivation and there is a significant difference in male and female autonomous motivation score.  $t(298) = -2.81$ , P-Value = 0.005, CI [-3.77, -0.66]. These findings have strong support from past studies (Daley, & Duda, 2006; Clement-Guillotin, Chalabaev & Fontayne, 2011;

Gillet & Rosnet, 2008), they also suggested significant differences in level of autonomous motivation between male and female respondents. Study conducted by Markland found that there is no significant effect of gender on employees' autonomous motivation (Markland, & Tobin, 2004).

The next hypothesis was, H<sub>2</sub>: Autonomous motivation is significantly different among different age groups. Findings of the study revealed there is a statistically significant relationship between Age and Employees autonomous motivation and it significantly differ among different age groups,  $F(5,294) = 2.56$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.027$ . Findings of the current study are supported by the past studies conducted by Mroczek and Robert, as they also reported that older employees are more motivated as compared to middle age group (Mroczek, & Kolarz, 1998). The significant relationship between age and autonomous motivation is also described in the literature (Sheldon, Kasser, Houser-Marko, Jones, & Turban, 2005; Roberts, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2003).

### **Limitations of the Study**

- The study was confined to public sector medical university of Karachi. Inclusion of private university could broaden the scope of study.
- The random sampling technique for collection of data was applied due to certain constraints. It is however realized that use of multi-stage sampling could bring forth more aspects of employees' autonomous motivation.
- Focus in demographic characteristics was placed on age and gender. Collection of data on variety of professions and job status could be more supportive to the research work.

### **Recommendations**

Following techniques may be helpful in satisfying the employee needs towards having competence, relatedness and autonomy, and may serve as the basis for work motivation leading to productive performance:

- Open discussions and question-answer sessions on notable issues and their solutions.
- Active and patient listening to employees' views.
- Developing clarity of job assignments among employees.
- Offering positive and healthy feedback about the issues discussed in interactive sessions between supervisor/managers and employees.
- Minimizing coercive controls about rewards and comparisons among employees.
- Exchange of knowledge and its sharing, and also developing talent with the aim to enhancing autonomy, competence and relatedness among managers and employees.

### **Conclusion**

Findings of study show there are certain factors (such as salary, positive feedback, feeling of pride on doing well at work, learning new things, feeling of accomplishment and solving work issues that play major role on employee autonomous motivation. Demographic characteristics such as age and gender have significant impact

on employees' autonomous motivation. The educational institutions need to conduct exploratory research to perform in-depth analysis of factors that increase employee autonomous motivation that leads to organization productivity.

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