

# Employee Motivation and Performance in Entrepreneurial Firms

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## ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research work is to determine the relationship between motivation and organizational performance in entrepreneurial firms. Other specific objectives are to examine the relationship between performance and recognition, job security, promotion, training and development, leadership style, etc. Questionnaires were used to elicit responses and/or perceptions of workers from Timafrique Services Ltd, Warri, Delta State. Data were analyzed using percentages and mean scores. Among others, we found out that financial incentives, job security, promotion, leadership style, etc. have a major role to play in relation to organizational performance. Premised upon the researcher's findings, it was therefore concluded that well motivated employees will no doubt exert extra effort on behalf of the firm and demonstrate unreserved dedication and commitment to work enthusiastically, sacrifice self interest for the firm, geared towards organization's goals' attainment. Thus, it is therefore recommended that firms adequately motivate its employees to induce better performance and organizational growth as it leads to improved performance, increased productivity and increased profitability. Employees should be equally rewarded and promoted accordingly for high performance and commensurately punish deviants/disgruntled elements in the firm to serve as a deterrent to others and strive for superior performance towards achieving congruent goals.

**Keywords:** motivation, leadership style, job security, performance, training and development, promotion, financial incentives

## INTRODUCTION

In recent times, a great deal of attention has often been given to the role of motivation in contemporary firms. This is owing to the poor attitude to work exhibited by employees. Among them are lateness to work, absenteeism, insubordination, fraud, bribery, arson, pilfering, dishonesty, non-challenge, misuse of organizational properties, etc. In the workplace, workers loiter about aimlessly, exchange hot words with superiors, disregard official instructions, leave office at will and come back when it pleases them or in some cases, reappear the next morning or thereabout. These general negative attitudes to work have adversely affected productivity and firms' overall performance. The role of employee motivation in the social and economic advancement of firms cannot be over-emphasized. The primary objective of firms today is that of profit maximization, growth, efficiency and effectiveness. The success of any firm is largely dependent on the presence of employees and how well they are being motivated. A firm that puts great emphasis on employee motivation is directly planning for its survival and steady growth. Yes, motivation seems to be positively related to a firm's performance. Employee motivation leads to acceptance and congruence of both the firm and employees' goals and values. And as such, employees exert extra effort on behalf of the firm and nurture the desire to remain attached to the firm, demonstrating unreserved dedication and willingness to sacrifice one's self interest for the firm.

In recognition of this fact, the concern of most employers is to make employees develop and maintain a sense of commitment, loyalty, duty, obligation, etc towards the attainment of firms' goals. Firms give employees flexible working hours, which make work more attractive and interesting. Financial rewards are also given to employees, provision of job security generating a sense of job autonomy, etc, which lead to increased productivity, effective team work, cost-saving success, improves firm's overall performance and so on. The onus lies on firms to look for ways to improve quality of their work output which therefore brings into focus the role of employee motivation as a means of improving organizational performance. *A firm that puts great emphasis on employee motivation is directly planning for its survival and steady growth.* Very often in factory settings, what causes work activities to halt or go on, at a slow pace is attributable to employee motivation or lack of it (Ekakitie, 2004). Motivation should not be limited to financial or monetary incentives/inducement. Motivation causes employees to strive for superior performance (Stoner, 2003). Firms do things they hope will satisfy those drives, needs and desires and induce subordinates to act in a desired manner. Human resources is no doubt, the most important, most valuable and costly resources of a firm. Thus, it is necessary that this research examines the role of employee motivation on the overall performance in entrepreneurial firms.

Several problems have been observed in employees attitude to work which stands as an impediment to job performance. Some of such problems could be embezzlement of funds, dishonesty, lateness to work, absenteeism, insubordination, misuse of firm's properties, pilferage, etc. Work conditions also have a relative effect on firm's performance especially where there's no proper ventilation, power outage problem, idleness,

overcrowding, noise, etc. Firms on the other hand, need to create imagined needs and satisfy those needs to inspire employees. Experience has shown that when employees' expectations are unmet, they become frustrated with their work. However, there's one problem linked with the concept of employee motivation. It is examining the role of employee motivation on the overall performance of entrepreneurial firms which is considered to be the research problem of this study.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main objective of this research study is to determine the role of employee motivation on performance in entrepreneurial firms. Other specific objectives are:

- (a) To examine the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance in entrepreneurial firms.
- (b) To find out the relationship between training and development and employee performance in entrepreneurial firms.
- (c) To ascertain the role of promotion on organizational performance in entrepreneurial firms.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter seeks to review past, existing and contemporary literatures of authorities, relevant to the subject matter in order to identify some areas of congruence and incongruities.

#### **THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MOTIVATION**

Motivation has been viewed from various perspectives by different authors. Petri, (1981) posited that an individual who is motivated, usually works hard, sustains a pace of hard work and exhibits behavior towards achieving important goals. Olusola, (1982) viewed motivation as the difference between what employees can and what they actually do in any given situation at workplace. According to him, motivation is made up of an individual's basic needs and the conscious efforts to gratify and satisfy those needs. Motivation involves a particular type of reason for an action of a very specific and directed sort. It starts with basic needs and actions to satisfy those needs. Motivation is the deliberate and planned inducement of work persons to work by providing ancillary impetus that drives them towards effective goal attainment. Such ancillary impetus should involve actions to reward and encourage workers and/or even commend them. According to Adebekin and Gbadamosi, (1997), motivation basically means "an individual needs, desire and concept that cause him or her to act in a particular manner." This makes the individual put in extra effort willingly and enthusiastically in the workplace towards achieving group goal. For Mathis and Jackson, (1982), motivation is an emotion or desire operating on a person's will and causing to act. Ekakitie, (2009) in his own view, postulated that motivation as the willingness to exert high level of effort toward individual and/or organizational goals, conditioned by the effort's ability to satisfy some individual needs.

Nana, (2007) acclaimed that motivation is concerned with the "why" of human behaviour. It moves one towards a goal, directed and channeled towards behavior, sustains and maintains behavior and changes people's behavior. Appleby, (1981) stated that motivation is the way urges, aspirations, drives and needs of human beings direct, channel or explain their behaviour. For subordinates *Job design, Behavior modification, Recognition, Pride, Financial incentives and many others*. From the foregoing definitions, it is certain that motivation is not a behaviour but a complex internal state that cannot be directly observed but can affect behaviour. Motivation acts as an energizing force which originates and directs activities towards diverse objectives. Motivation has been linked with urges, instincts, purposes, goals and desires geared towards achieving a firm's goals.

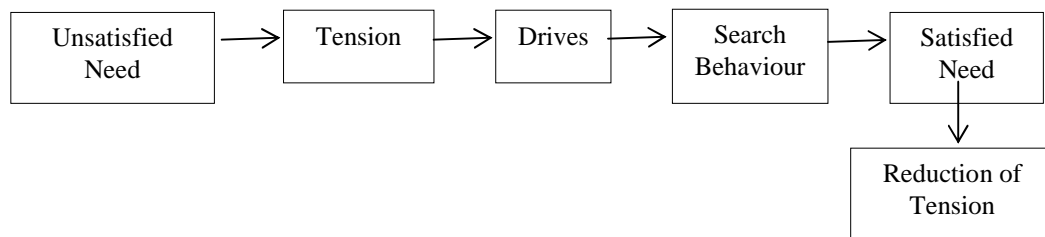
#### **THE MOTIVATION PROCESS**

The motivation process starts with unsatisfied needs. Mullins, (1999) opined that when a person's motivational driving force to achieve a need or an expectation is blocked before reaching the desired goal, two possible outcomes emerge and they are (a) Constructive behavior which may take the form of problem solving (removal of barrier) and (b) Frustration, when a person fails to achieve a desired goal, he or she may become frustrated and a frustrated person may become aggressive (exhibiting physical or verbal attack on some persons or objects openly or secretly). Also, frustration may lead to withdrawal i.e. giving up when needs and expectations of workers are not met. Some of these effects will be:

Lateness to work (b) Leaving workplace early (c) Absenteeism (d) Refusal to accept responsibility (e) Avoiding decision making (f) Passing work over to colleagues or leaving job undone, etc.

All these and others negate the pursuit and achievement of a firm's goals, because it results in poor performance of employees. The motivation process starts with a perceived need (an unsatisfied need) which produces tension within the individual. This need motivates the individual to behave in a certain manner. If a need is satisfied, the tension relaxes and another unsatisfied need emerges. But when an individual is unable to satisfy these needs, in that way unable to reduce tension, frustration creeps in. Thus, to motivate, firms must create real or imagined needs for employees to aspire to. A real need could be the desire to achieve through promotion, increase in wages or enjoyment of increased organizational favours such as company cars with a chauffeur, while imagined needs could be an aspiration to have a cup of coffee every morning.

**Fig 1.: A diagrammatic representation of the motivation process**



*Source:* Adopted from Ekakitie, S. E., Management: Behavioural Approach. Bob Peco Printing & Publishing Company Ltd., 2009. P. 121,

### THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF MOTIVATION

Various theories of human motivation have been propounded over the years. These have been flavoured by the particular philosophy or theory of personality which researchers have tended to support. Actually, there is no generally agreed and comprehensive theories of motivation. Although in some specific aspects, there are some measures of agreement among psychologists, which is observed in the coincidence of views held by Abraham Maslow, which recognizes hierarchical structure of needs and motives. Theories of motivation can be characterized as the reinforcement of drives or needs with the individual actions. Process theories emphasized on how and by what means individuals are affected by one's behavior. These motivational theories propounded by early fathers of scientific management regarded human resources as tools for increased productivity and organizational performance. According to these models, individuals perform better when they can achieve personal and firm's (congruent) goals.

### ABRAHAM MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS THEORY

Abraham Maslow's theory of needs was propounded in 1954. He hypothesized five (5) levels of needs and categorized these needs in a hierarchical order of ascendancy. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory is perhaps the foremost needs theory, very informative and has provoked quite a stir and researches among management scholars. A need is a strong feeling of deficiency in some aspect of a person's life that creates an uncomfortable situation or tension. That tension becomes a motivating force, causing a person to act towards satisfying the perceived need, thereby reducing tension. Nwachukwu, (2007) stressed that once a need is satisfied, it ceases to be a motivator and gives rise to another need. While Ekakitie, (2004) added that until a need is satisfied or done away with, tension will always persist. Man being a want-animal, must first satisfy certain lower needs, before higher order needs (Ekakitie, 2009). According to him, the higher order needs comprises (a) Self actualization need (b) Esteem/Ego need (c) Social need while the lower order needs comprises (a) Safety/Security need and (b) Physiological need

However, Maslow's hierarchy of needs are clearly identified hereunder:

**Physiological Needs:** Need for food, shelter, clothing, sex, etc.

**Security/Safety Needs:** Need for protection from both physical and psychological harm.

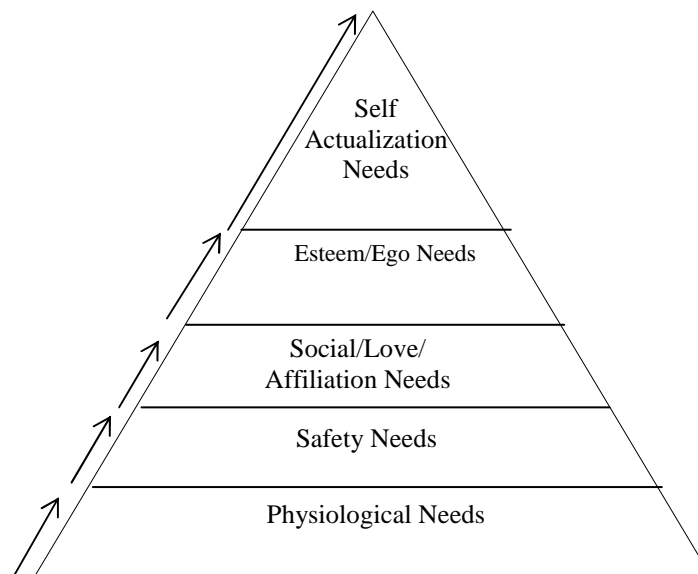
**Social Need:** Need to be loved, need for affiliation and belongingness.

**Ego/Esteem Need:** Need for respect and recognition from friends, peers and superiors.

**Self Actualization Need:** Need for accomplishments, self fulfillment and ambition.

These needs can be diagrammatically represented below:

**Fig. 2. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs framework**



**Source:** Adopted from Olannye, A. P & Nana, U. J., Management Fundamentals and Practice. Pee Jen Publications, 2007. P. 111.

**PHYSIOLOGICAL NEEDS:**

This need consists of the primary/basic needs of all human beings for biological maintenance and sustenance. As soon as the physiological needs are satisfied, the individual need for security or safety arises thereafter.

**SAFETY NEEDS:**

This set of needs emerge from the desire for protection against danger and threat, as well as physical and emotional injuries. This includes the needs for safety, stability and absence of pain, threat or illness. This needs are expressed in the desire for safe, stable job with medical facilities, unemployment and retirement benefits.

**SOCIAL/LOVE/AFFILIATION NEEDS:**

Once the physiological and safety needs are satisfied, social/love/affiliation needs will emerge and dominate behaviours. These are desires for friendships, love, affection and belongingness. People want to be accepted by others for what they are. When social needs are unmet, the mental health of employees may be affected and the resultant effect could be absenteeism, low productivity, lack of job satisfaction, emotional breakdown, high stress levels and high labour turnover. Workers in a bid to achieve this need will have to value jobs that afford them opportunities for social interactions among coworkers, associations, etc.

**ESTEEM/EGO NEEDS:**

Indubitably, everyone practically in one way or the other has a need for self respect and for the respect of others. Esteem/ego need is the need for self-respect, competence, acquisition, achievement, retention, independence, etc it also includes both personal feelings of achievement, self-worth and recognition and/or for respect from others. People want to be seen as competent and able and such egoistic people are concerned about opportunities for their competence and capabilities, to excel at something and master a skill and even become independent. Respect or prestige increases responsibility, promotion, recognition and appreciation by others and lead to feelings of work adequacy and self-confidence.

**SELF ACTUALIZATION NEEDS:**

This need is often called fulfillment need. Self-actualization or the realization of one's potentials, is the goal of self-actualization i.e. becoming what one is capable of becoming, which also requires that a person partly fulfills others' needs sometimes. When self-actualization needs are dominant, people channel their most creative and constructive skills into their work. Firms who focus primarily on these needs recognize that every job has areas that allow innovation and managers cannot be the only creative people. Thus, firm motivate employees by involving them in decision making, restructuring of jobs and other special assignment that require that unique skills. This need pushes one into becoming creative, inventive and innovative. Therefore, firms must determine the level of needs of employees and adopt appropriate motivational strategies for creating conducive working environment.

**MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE**

Drucker, (1974) averred that an initially unsatisfied need is counter-productive. Moreover, Harry Levinston, emphasized that unmotivated employees are threats to a firm or an organization. Consequently, it will adversely affect employees performance. Conversely, when employees are well motivated, it leads to increased

productivity and improved organizational performance. The value of firms today is largely dependent on the value of its employees (workforce). Most successful companies today spend huge sum of money on its workforce because human resources are regarded as the most valuable assets whose values can be enhanced through investment. In contemporary entrepreneurial firms, employees are seen to need more than just a job. They need where they can grow and it is the responsibility of the firms wherein they work, to provide an enabling working environment that is stimulating and challenging. For performance potentials of employees to be fully realized, firms need capable, talented and committed workforce. Yes, motivation influences performance and as such, firms must respond to motivation if they are to develop a committed workforce, to enable employees work willingly and enthusiastically towards attainment of group/individual and organizational goal. Employees are the livelihood of firms that are thriving today, hence employee motivation can be said to be the biggest driver of organizational performance. A firm or an organization which is able to motivate its employees and maintain them, is able to leverage their drive and zeal in order to ensure stellar performance. In the light of the above, if employees are not motivated to do their respective jobs efficiently and effectively, production will suffer and the firm's overall performance will equally be adversely affected. There are various incentives and techniques firms can utilize to motivate employees. These incentives range from two categories viz-a-viz (a) *Financial/monetary incentives* and (b) *Non-financial /non-monetary incentives*.

#### **FINANCIAL INCENTIVES**

Financial incentives often comes in form of wages and salaries, bonus schemes, car loans, housing allowance, clothing allowance, etc. The importance of monetary/financial incentive as a motivator cannot be over-emphasized, particularly in this part of the world where money seems to be the major motivator. Money is a very key incentive in any work settings and mostly to workers in developing countries where the level of poverty, unemployment and other social malaise reign supreme. Financial incentive is inter-twined with most needs. The issue remains that people do not work only for money but certainly few individuals will work, if any, where there is no money involved at all. Nonetheless, for money to motivate employees' performance, it has been argued that certain conditions must be met and some of them are that Money must be important to the individual, Money must be seen by the individual as direct reward for performance, The marginal amount of money must be perceived as being significant. Firms must be discretionary and objective in rewarding high performance with pay. Researchers have shown that approximately 50% of workers in various industries are paid by result. Statistics also showed that successful companies use financial incentives system to arouse the interest of workers. This suggests that financial incentives have great impact on the performance of employees. According to Root, (1988) money is a motivator because employees would want their earnings increased, so they also will increase their activities towards production to justify the increment of their salaries/earnings/other fringe benefits.

#### **NON-FINANCIAL INCENTIVES**

The non-financial incentives give personal satisfaction and results in job enrichment to the individual. The non-financial incentives are rewards that give inner joy to individual and assurance of job continuity but cannot be measured or quantified in monetary terms. Some of them are good and favourable company policies, Job enrichment, Job security, Full appreciation for work done (commendation), Sympathetic and empathetic understanding of employees' personal problems, Authority and accountability, Increased responsibilities, Promotion and so on. These factors as a matter of fact, motivate today's workforce towards improved/higher performance, thereby increasing productivity which in turn will definitely increase profitability. Motivation rekindles the burning passion for action among workforce in an organization. Some of these motivational tools are promotion, prestige, praises/commendations, pay, etc. to arouse the interest of workers. According to Obisi, (1996) for motivational tools to be successfully functional, it must be dynamic. This is premised on the fact that motivational tools which are not flexible are dangerous and counter-productive. *Firms must and should not forget that a satisfied need is no longer a motivator.* For the individual, adequate motivation leads to job satisfaction and it is generally viewed as an emotional response that represents the degree to which a person likes his/her job. Feelings of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction tend to reflect on employees' appraisal of job experiences in the present and past, than expectation for the future. On the other hand, demotivated workforce will exhibit some negative tendencies towards their job which could be in form of Reduced productivity, High labour turnover, Absenteeism, Lateness to work, etc. Again, rewards based on personal influences demoralizes the workforce. Thus, merits and hard work should be rewarded adequately and accordingly. If the reverse becomes the case, performance of employees and productivity will adversely be affected. Thus, firms should motivate its workforce either through financial incentives and/or non-financial incentives i.e. emotional motivator. No doubt, a motivated workforce will certainly have a more productive and committed output as effectiveness and efficiency help to generate positive work environment both for customers and employees.

#### **LEADERSHIP AND PERFORMANCE**

It is difficult if not impossible to see any firm without a leader. In any organizational structure, men with skills will be required to accomplish established goals. There should be a leader to show the way forward and



motivate workers towards achieving predetermined goals. Leadership therefore, drives the mechanism of a firm towards the realization of its objectives and goals. The leader is the custodian and executor of the vision and mission of an organization (Ekakitie, 2009). The leader should be the trainer and coach that drills the philosophies and cultural values of a firm/an organization into very department and person. Such values should affect the behavior of the individual worker, which in turn, affects work group(s) or team(s). Group behavior finally defines the organizational/firm's behaviour. Oladipo and Ekakitie, (2004) stressed that a leader should be influential, acting as a leader and not as a boss. According to them, a leader should be seen to have inspirational capacities to lead, move and motivate the person under his authority and control. Nwachukwu, (1988) saw a leader as the most influential person in any organization, who provided direction, guides group activities and ensure that group objectives are attained. Leadership thus pervades all organizations/firms and it is indeed universal.

From the aforesaid, a leader ought to do what befits the title and not seeing himself as a boss. The approach towards improvement of employees' attitudes and behaviours in any firm also depends on the particular approach, the leader adopts and to a large extent, can affect employees' performance accordingly. Thus, leaders should look for the best approach to managing their subordinates because they are saddled with the responsibility of ensuring that operational plans are implemented appropriately. A good leader should be capable of persuading others enthusiastically to act towards the attainment of group goals (Nwachukwu, 2007). Thus, to achieve strategic goals of any organization, employees should be well coordinated because it would have direct influence on the realization of goals/objectives of the firm. A leader exercises power over others for the purpose of influencing their behaviours. Leadership exists in various forms in an organization (Brown, 1954). In his study, he identified three (3) basic types of leadership styles namely: (a) Autocratic leadership style (b) Democratic leadership style (c) Laissez-faire leadership style. Leland Bradford and Ronald Lippitt gave a summary of these (3) leadership styles as:

**A) AUTOCRATIC LEADER**

Has little trust and faith in his subordinates, very conscious of his position, feels that pay is just a reward for work and it's the only reward that will motivate his/her workers, gives orders and demands that they be carried out without questions, production is good when the leader is present, but stops when he's absent, Group members assume no responsibility for performance and merely do what they are told to do.

**B) DEMOCRATIC LEADER**

Shares decision with his subordinates and gets them involved, criticizes and praises group members objectively, develops feeling of responsibility within the group, quality and productivity is generally high, motivates and urges his subordinates to achieve set goals, explains the rationale behind any decision he takes, inspires and instills confidence, very easy to access and associate with.

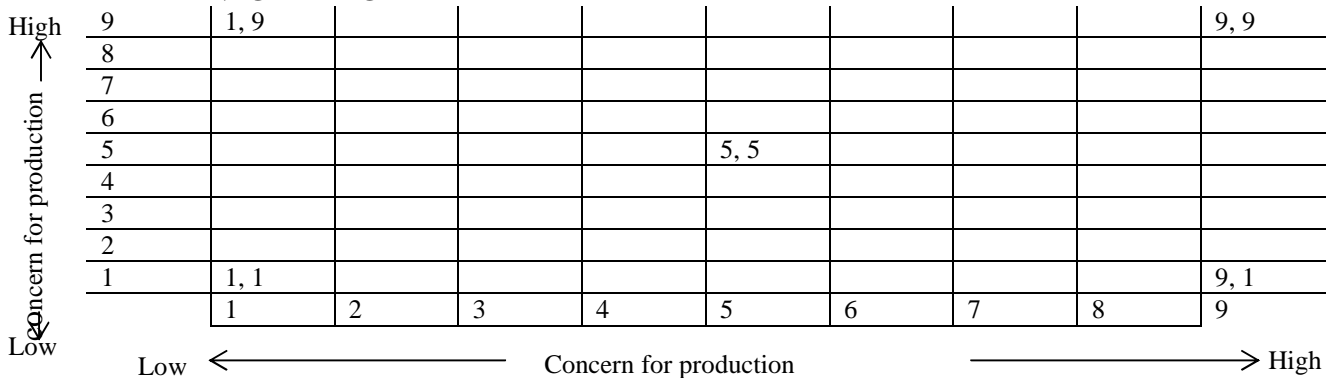
**C) LAISSEZ-FAIRE LEADER**

Has no confidence in his leadership, does not set goals for the group, decision making is performed by whoever in the group is willing to accept it, productivity is generally low and work is sloppy, the group has little interest in work, team morale is reduced, often blames the workers he ought to praise, most times, he is confused.

**MANAGERIAL GRID OF ROBERT BLAKE AND JANE MOUTON**

Blake and Mouton, (1964) developed this technique as a means for assessing and evaluating managers' performance with concern for work on a rating 1-9 and concern for task marked on a similar rating 1-9. This is represented here below:

**THE MANAGERIAL GRID**



Source: Adopted from Olannye, A. P. and Nana, U. J., Management Fundamentals and Practice. Pee Jen Publications, 2007. P. 119

**CONCERN FOR PRODUCTION**

The 1,1 management style depicts leaders who possess this management style and exert minimum effort to accomplish task (Nana, 2007). It has low concern for people and for production. It's the impoverished

management style. It's also called the laissez-faire management style because the leader abdicates his/her role of leadership.

The 1,9 management style is commonly known as the country club management. It has low concern for production and high concern for employees. The leader with this management style focuses on being supportive and considerate of employees hence task efficiency is not his primary concern. It's an easy going style as the leader tries to create a secured and happy work environment for subordinates. The achievement of organizational goals is not his concern.

The 9,1 management style is also called the task management. The leader with this management style has high concern for production and low concern for employees. He concentrates only on task efficiency and shows little regard for development and morales of subordinates. He regards men as commodity like machines.

The 5,5 management style is also called the middle of the road management. A leader who possesses this style of management will be fair and firm (Olannye and Nana, 2007). This is a compatibility of concerns for both employees and concern for production. The goal of this style of management is adequate task efficiency and satisfactory morales. Adams, (1964) and colleagues discovered that if employees thought that they were being treated equitably, their work effort will be sustained. But if they thought they were not being treated equitably, then their effort would decline.

The 9,9 management style is also called team management, which has a high concern for both employees and production. The leader facilitates production and morales by coordinating and integrating work related activities.

Conclusively, concern for people and for production is complementary rather than being exclusive. They suggest that effective leaders should integrate these two (2) concerns in order to achieve better effective results (Olannye and Nana, 2007).

#### **PROMOTION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

An average employee looks forward to the day he/she will earn a promotion and be duly promoted. Promotion is a reward earned, for past performance, an encouragement to spur on, to continue to excel. It is a vote of no confidence and a blessing. Promotion is a motivator of behaviour (Nwachukwu, 2006). An employee who is denied promotion for a long time gets frustrated with the job and becomes aggressive. Martin Patchen recorded a study conducted in an oil firm in a small Canadian city, in order to find out the relationship between promotion and absenteeism. The study covered non-supervisory workers totaling one thousand, five hundred (1,500). The result? Men who felt they have been treated fairly with regards to promotion were committed and were often less. Thus, promotion influences employee performance as revealed by this study. It revealed that men's feeling or perception about fair treatment as it relates to promotion from management can have a marked effect on their behaviour. Oloko, (1973) carried out a socio-psychological survey in a major manufacturing organization in Western state. In the survey, about five hundred (500) employees of the company were covered, four hundred and thirty (430) being from the rank and the file factory workers while seventy (70) were managerial personnel. In one of the questionnaires used, the coworkers were used to tick those things that are most important to them. Out of the fourteen (14) items, promotion opportunity was rated first, followed by the salary and job security.

#### **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

Once a firm has succeeded in employing those considered suitable and duly qualified as possessing the required potentials for the job success, the firm should and must follow up with effective programme for training and development in meeting the manpower needs (Akubuiro, 1998). New employees require proper orientation and training while older ones require continuous retraining and development in order to further enhance their contribution to the steady growth and survival of the firm (Anigboro, 2007). Fajana, (1997) defined training as the acquisition of specific detailed and routine skills and techniques while development is the systematic process of education, training and growth by which a person acquires and applies information, knowledge, skills, attitude and perceptions. Training is focused on low level employees while development is aimed at the middle and high level staff. Training and development is crucial for employee's improvement on their performance and firm's growth and development. It helps to minimize or remove performance deficiency as occasioned by excessive wastage and poor quality, increases productivity resulting from using little amount of resources inputs to achieve greater outputs, reduces production or operations cost, increases ability of employees to cope with new technological demands of their job, Increases employees' morales and greater job satisfaction, behavioural/attitudinal change that may result in positive work contributions, there's usually enhanced feeling of self-esteem, lower employees' turnover and reduced absenteeism.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

##### **INTRODUCTION**

This study made use of experimental survey because it involves individuals and we can systematically observe them with respect to facts, qualities, characteristics, events, areas of interest as factually as possible to answer questions posed to them by the problem. It is not feasible to study all employees in all firms hence a selected firm in Warri Metropolis, was chosen to be attended to (a survey on the population of interest). The employees

were visited and questionnaires were administered at place of work and then a cross-sectional interview was equally used to collect data directly from respondents. The data was collected and analyzed using an appropriate measure to produce the findings of the study. The researcher estimated the numerical value of the sample size required for this research study and thus made use of fifty (50) workers in the firm of reference, Questionnaires were drawn to reveal the hypotheses to be tested and were designed alongside the research questions formulated for the study. Also, the researcher had a cross-sectional interview with respondents.

#### DATA ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

The data collected from respondents were analyzed based on the nature of data collected. The personal data (characteristics) were analyzed with respect to its frequency, characteristics and percentage, to qualify and quantify opinions of data collected. Other data were analyzed using simple percentage such as:

$$\text{Percentage of response} = \frac{\text{No. of Response}}{\text{Total No. of Respondents}} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

The mean scores were interpreted thus:

- 0.5 – 1.49 (Strongly Disagree)
- 1.5 – 2.49 (Disagree)
- 2.5 – 3.49 (Undecided)
- 3.5 – 4.49 (Agree)
- 4.5 – 5 (Strongly Agree)

#### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Summary of data collected were presented, analysis and interpretation of findings in line with the sections of the questionnaires administered, using figures and usually in a tabular form. Each analysis was extracted from respondents' opinion. Out of 50 questionnaires designed, only 39 were administered as some 11 workers were on standby. So, only 33 questionnaires were retrieved and were useable.

#### EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION OF MOTIVATORS IN ENTREPRENEURIAL FIRMS

**Table 1:** Employees' perception of motivators.

S/N	Item Statement	Response Option/Frequency					Total	$\bar{x}$
		SA	A	U	D	SD		
		5	4	3	2	1		
1	Financial/Monetary incentive can motivate me.	17 (85)	13 (52)	2 (6)	1 (2)	0 (0)	145	4.40
2	Non-financial or monetary incentive does motivate me.	7 (35)	10 (40)	5 (15)	5 (10)	6 (6)	106	3.21
3	Apart from financial and non-financial incentives, I can still work effectively well	5 (25)	7 (28)	11 (33)	4 (8)	6 (6)	100	3.03
4	Absence of financial and non-financial incentives, will affect my work attitude and performance negatively.	11 (55)	8 (32)	8 (24)	3 (6)	3 (3)	120	3.64
TOTAL		40 (200)	38 (152)	26 (78)	13 (26)	15 (15)	471	14.28
AVERAGE		10 (50)	9.50 (38)	6.50 (19.5)	3.25 (6.5)	3.75 (3.75)	117.75	3.57

*Source: Survey data, 2013*

In table 1, on item 1, it was observed that 17 respondents strongly agreed that financial incentives can motivate them. 13 agreed, 2 undecided, 4 disagreed and none strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.40 indicated that majority of the respondents were in agreement that financial/monetary incentives can motivate them. On item 2, 7 respondents strongly agreed, that non-financial incentives does motivate them. 10 agreed, 5 undecided, 5 disagreed and 6 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.21 implied that majority of the respondents were undecided (unsure) whether or not financial incentives does motivate them. On item 3, 5 respondents strongly agreed, that apart from financial and non-financial incentives, they can still work effectively well. 7 agreed, 11 undecided, 4 disagreed and 6 strongly disagreed. This yielded a mean score of 3.03 which was an indication that majority of the respondents are equally uncertain if actually they still can work effectively well, besides financial or non-financial incentives. On item 4, 11 respondents strongly agreed that absence of financial and non-financial incentives, will affect their work attitude and/or performance negatively. 8 agreed, 8 undecided, 3 disagreed and 3 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.64 depicted that majority of the respondents were in agreement that absence of financial and non-financial incentives will negatively affect their work attitude and/or performance.



On the whole, an average mean score of 3.57 indicated that most respondents have a favourable perception of motivators in entrepreneurial firms.

### MOTIVATORS IN FIRMS

**Table 2:** Motivators in firms

S/N	Item Statement	Response Option/Frequency					Total	$\bar{x}$
		SA	A	U	D	SD		
		5	4	3	2	1		
1	I do work only for pay.	2 (10)	6 (24)	6 (18)	10 (20)	9 (9)	81	2.45
2	I work for other benefits like promotion, recognition, achievement, etc.	18 (90)	12 (48)	3 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	147	4.45
3	I work to gain experience and enhance my performance and skills.	13 (65)	18 (72)	1 (3)	0 (0)	1 (1)	141	4.27
TOTAL		33 (165)	36 (144)	10 (30)	10 (20)	10 (10)	369	11.17
AVERAGE		11 (55)	12 (48)	3.33 (10)	3.33 (6.67)	3.33 (3.33)	123	3.72

*Source: Survey data, 2013*

In table 2 on item 1, it was noted that 2 respondents strongly disagreed. 6 agreed and 6 undecided. 10 disagreed and 9 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 2.45 denoted most respondents' disagreement as to working for only pay. On item 2, 18 respondents strongly agreed that they work for other benefits like promotion, recognition, achievement, etc. 12 agreed, 3 undecided and none neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.45 signified that most respondents were in agreement with the fact that employees work for other benefits like recognition, promotion, achievement, etc. On item 3, 13 respondents strongly agreed that they equally work to gain experience. 18 agreed, 1 undecided, none disagreed and just 1 strongly disagreed. It generated a mean score of 4.27 which implied that majority of the respondents were in equally in agreement that they work to gain experience and enhance their performance/skills.

On the whole therefore, it can be deduced that an average mean of 3.72 indicated that most respondents agreed that several motivators can be used to induce performance favourably.

### INDUCEMENT OF PERFORMANCE IN ENTREPRENEURIAL FIRMS

**Table 3:** Inducement of employee performance

S/N	Item Statement	Response Option/Frequency					Total	$\bar{x}$
		SA	A	U	D	SD		
		5	4	3	2	1		
1	Met expectations and earned rewards can make me exert extra effort.	17 (85)	15 (60)	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	148	4.48
2	Sanction/punishment will make me work harder.	1 (5)	3 (12)	5 (15)	10 (16)	14 (14)	86	2.61
3	I work to gain experience and enhance my performance and skills.	4 (70)	16 (64)	2 (6)	0 (0)	1 (1)	141	4.27
TOTAL		32 (160)	38 (152)	13 (39)	8 (16)	8 (8)	375	11.36
AVERAGE		10.67 (53.33)	12.67 (50.67)	4.33 (13)	2.67 (5.33)	2.67 (2.67)	125	3.79

*Source: Survey data, 2013*

Table 3, represented the distribution of employee inducement of performance. On item 1, 17 respondents strongly agreed that met expectations and earned rewards can make them exert more effort. 15 respondents agreed, 1 undecided, none neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.48 inferred that majority of the respondents were in agreement that met expectations and earned rewards will induce better performance. On item 2, 1 respondent strongly agreed that sanction/punishment will make him/her work harder. 7 respondents agreed, 10 undecided, 8 disagreed and 7 strongly disagreed. It yielded a mean score of 2.61 which indicated that majority of the respondents were undecided whether or not, sanction/punishment will make them work harder. On item 3, 14 respondents strongly agreed that job satisfaction will make them put in their best. 16 respondents agreed, 2 undecided, none disagreed and just 1 respondent strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.27 was an indication that job satisfaction will make them improve on their performance.

Conclusively, an average mean of 3.79 implied that majority of the respondents agreed that job satisfaction can result in improved performance and increased productivity.

## ENHANCEMENT OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

**Table 4:** Enhance of Employee Performance.

S/N	Item Statement	Response Option/Frequency					Total	$\bar{x}$
		SA	A	U	D	SD		
		5	4	3	2	1		
1	Adequate training can enhance my performance.	16 (80)	15 (60)	1 (3)	1 (2)	0 (0)	145	4.40
2	The firm does not train its employees.	1 (5)	5 (20)	6 (18)	13 (26)	8 (8)	77	2.33
3	The training the firm provides is adequate.	6 (30)	6 (24)	10 (30)	7 (14)	4 (4)	102	3.09
4	The training I received in this firm, has enhanced my performance.	7 (35)	18 (72)	3 (9)	3 (6)	2 (2)	124	3.76
TOTAL		30 (150)	44 (176)	20 (60)	24 (48)	14 (14)	448	13.58
AVERAGE		7.5 (37.5)	11 (44)	5 (15)	6 (12)	3.5 (3.5)	112	3.40

*Source: Survey data, 2013*

The analysis in Table 4, on item 1, showed that 16 respondents strongly agreed that adequate training can enhance their performance. 15 respondents agreed, 1 undecided, 1 disagreed and none strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.40 was an indication that majority of the respondents were in agreement that adequate training can enhance performance. On item 2 above, 1 respondent strongly agreed, that the firm does not train its employees. 5 respondents agreed, 6 undecided, 13 disagreed and 8 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 2.33 indicated that majority of the respondents disagreed that the firm trains its employees. On item 3, 6 respondents strongly agreed that the training the firm provided was adequate. 6 respondents agreed, 10 undecided, 7 disagreed and 4 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.09 implied that majority of the respondents were undecided whether or not the training the firm provided was adequate. On item 4, 7 respondents strongly agreed that the training received in the firm has enhanced their performance. 18 respondents agreed, 3 undecided, 3 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.76 indicated that majority of the respondents agreed that the training received in the firm enhanced their performance.

Summarily, the average mean score of 3.4 inferred that employee performance can be enhanced through adequate training.

## THREATS AND PERFORMANCE

**Table 5:** Threat and Employee Performance

S/N	Item Statement	Response Option/Frequency					Total	$\bar{x}$
		SA	A	U	D	SD		
		5	4	3	2	1		
1	When threatened, increased productivity will result.	5 (25)	12 (48)	6 (18)	8 (16)	2 (2)	109	3.30
2	Threatened or not, I will still work at the same pace..	6 (30)	10 (40)	7 (21)	7 (14)	3 (3)	108	3.27
3	My performance will improve for fear of being sanctioned.	6 (30)	14 (56)	6 (18)	6 (12)	1 (1)	117	3.55
4	I, with my free will, can perform better.	10 (50)	15 (60)	5 (15)	2 (4)	1 (1)	130	3.94
TOTAL		27 (135)	51 (204)	24 (72)	23 (46)	7 (7)	464	14.06
AVERAGE		6.75 (33.75)	12.75 (51)	6 (18)	5.75 (11.5)	1.75 (1.75)	116	3.52

*Source: Survey data, 2013*

Table 5, on item 1, revealed that 5 respondents strongly agreed that when threatened, increased productivity results. 12 respondents agreed, 6 undecided, 8 disagreed and 2 strongly agreed. The mean score of 3.30 suggested that most respondents are skeptical and unsure if actually, their performance will improve and increased productivity would result if threatened. On item 2, 6 respondents agreed that whether threatened or not, they will still work at the same pace. 10 respondents agreed, 7 undecided, 7 disagreed and 3 strongly disagreed. It generated a mean score of 3.27 which also was an indication that majority of the respondents were uncertain whether or not, they will still work at the same pace, if threatened or not. On item 3, 6 respondents strongly agreed that their performance will improve for fear of being sanctioned. 14 respondents agreed, 6 undecided, 6

disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.55 can deduced that most respondents agreed that for fear of being sanctioned, they may decide to improve on their performance. On item 4, 10 respondents strongly agreed that with their free will, they can perform better. 15 respondents agreed, 5 undecided, 2 disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed. It generated a mean score of 3.94, indicating that most respondents agreed that they can perform better without close supervision, using their free will.

Thus, the average mean score of 3.52 signified that majority of the respondents agreed that threat has an influence on their performance, as employees will not want to negligently loose their job.

#### EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION OF SUPERIOR'S ATTITUDE

**Table 6:** Employee Perception of Superior's Attitude.

S/N	Item Statement	Response Option/Frequency					Total	$\bar{x}$
		SA	A	U	D	SD		
		5	4	3	2	1		
1	My willingness to accept or reject any assigned duty is a function of my perception about my superior.	8 (40)	13 (52)	3 (9)	7 (14)	2 (2)	117	3.55
2	I accept most responsibilities willingly.	10 (50)	12 (48)	6 (18)	3 (6)	2 (2)	124	3.76
3	I have a good harmonious working relationship with my superior.	12 (60)	18 (72)	3 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	141	4.27
TOTAL		30 (150)	43 (172)	12 (36)	10 (20)	4 (4)	382	11.58
AVERAGE		10 (50)	14.33 (57.33)	4 (12)	3.33 (6.67)	1.33 (1.33)	127.33	3.86

*Source: Survey data, 2013.*

Table 6 depicts employees' perception of their superior's attitude. On item 1, 8 respondents strongly agreed that their willingness to either accept or reject assigned duty, would be premised on, how they perceive their superior. 13 respondents agreed, 3 undecided, 7 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.55 suggested that most respondents agreed that if they perceive their superior's attitude as favourable, it will positively influence their acceptance of assigned duty. On the other hand, unfavourable perception of superior's attitude will equally make employees reject assigned duty either directly or indirectly and that will have adverse effect on performance. On item 2, 10 respondents strongly agreed that they accept most responsibilities willingly. 12 respondents agreed, 6 undecided, 3 disagreed and 2 strongly disagreed. It yielded a mean score of 3.76 which was an indication that majority of the respondents agreed that they accept most responsibilities willingly and not by coercion. On item 3, 12 respondents strongly agreed that they have good harmonious working relationship with their superior. 18 respondents agreed, 3 undecided, none neither disagreed nor strongly disagreed. The mean score of 4.27 implied that most respondents agreed that they have good working and harmonious relationship with their superior and this no doubt, had a resultant positive effect on their performance.

On the whole therefore, an average mean of 3.86 showed that majority of the respondents agreed that their perception of their superior's attitude has a resultant effect on their performance.

#### EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION OF MANAGER'S LEADERSHIP STYLE

**Table 7:** How Employees perceive their manager.

S/N	Item Statement	Response Option/Frequency					Total	$\bar{x}$
		SA	A	U	D	SD		
		5	4	3	2	1		
1	My manager is strict, autocratic and task-oriented.	6 (30)	7 (28)	3 (9)	9 (18)	8 (8)	93	2.82
2	He is liberal, democratic, employee concerned and production-oriented.	9 (45)	16 (64)	2 (6)	6 (12)	0 (0)	127	3.85
3	My manager's leadership style is so demotivating.	4 (20)	3 (12)	5 (15)	13 (26)	8 (8)	81	2.45
TOTAL		19 (95)	26 (104)	10 (30)	28 (56)	16 (16)	301	9.12
AVERAGE		6.33 (31.67)	8.67 (34.67)	3.33 (10)	9.33 (18.67)	5.33 (5.33)	100.33	3.04

*Source: Survey data, 2013*

Table 7 on item 1, showed that 6 respondents strongly agreed that their manager is strict, autocratic and task-oriented. 7 respondents agreed, 3 undecided, 9 disagreed and 8 strongly disagreed. The mean score of 2.82 implied that majority of the respondents were unsure or ambivalent about how they perceive their manager.

On item 2, 9 respondents strongly agreed that their manager is liberal, democratic, employee-concerned and production-oriented. 16 agreed, 2 undecided, 6 disagreed and none strongly disagreed. The mean score of 3.85 was an indication that majority of the respondents agreed that their manager is liberal, democratic, employee-concerned and production-oriented, which is the most preferred and recommended leadership style that will motivate employees to give it their best shot in terms of production and performance

In all entirety, an average mean score of 3.04 proved that most respondents were indeterminate about how they actually perceive their manager's leadership style.

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Among others, the researcher found out that Financial/Monetary incentives greatly motivate employees. That apart from pay, employees work for other benefits like promotion, recognition, experience, etc. Met expectations and earned rewards induce performance as it would make employees exert extra effort and remain committed and attached to the firm, wherein they work. Again, job satisfaction results in improved performance and increased productivity. Adequate training enhances performance. Employees perform better from their own volition when motivated and not necessarily when threatened with sanction. A good and harmonious working relationship among employees and/or with superiors has a positive resultant effect on employee work attitude and performance. Leadership style that is liberal, democratic and employee concerned is the most preferred by employees and this will go a long way to motivating employees toward improved performance and thus increase productivity such that, firms' established goals can be optimally attained.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the foregoing, one can deduce that the role of motivation in the social and economic advancement of contemporary firms cannot be over-emphasized. It is expected that the results of the findings of this research work and recommendations will be of immense assistance to firms in determining how best performance can be improved upon and enhanced, how best employees' needs can be satisfied, how employees' expectations can be met cum how employees' efforts can be rewarded accordingly for high performance and their commitment appropriately ensured. No doubt, a firm that puts great emphasis on motivation is directly planning for its growth and success.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Premised upon the findings of this research study, the recommendations were that firms should motivate their employees by paying them attractive salaries, encourage employees by way of prompt salary payment as at when due as it will help retain employees' loyalty to the firm. Moreso, firms should reward employees for hard work and equally promote those who are deserving of such opportunities. For this will induce performance and spur them on, to want to continue to excel, work willingly and enthusiastically toward achieving congruent goals. Adequate training and development enhances performance and as such, firms should design programmes for adequate training and development of employees to meeting manpower needs. This is necessary because firms need capable, committed and talented workforce to act/work in a desired manner. Modern day employees in contemporary firms need more than just a job. They need where they can work to grow, become more proficient, hence firms need to train and develop them since it will enhance their skills. Firms should adopt a democratic leadership style and be production-oriented and employee-concerned. Yes, concern for employees will make them strive for superior performance.

Contrarily, appropriate disciplinary actions should be taken against deviants in consonance with the stipulated disciplinary procedures of the firm, to serve as a deterrent to others and make them more up and doing in discharging their respective duties.

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