ANALYSIS OF MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING MALAGASY EMPLOYEES AND THEIR IMPACTS: THE PERSPECTIVE OF THEIR LINE MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

Despite its young population, Madagascar remains a precarious country. These people live in poverty despite their natural wealth and desperately seek work to fill the void, while those who do have jobs hang on to them, trying to motivate themselves. This study attempts to understand, through managers, the factors that motivate Malagasy employees to work, as well as the impact of these factors on the company and on employees. An exploratory study was conducted through interviews with 30 managers. Data processing was based on lexical analysis to identify the main themes related to motivational factors, Spearman's correlation to examine the relationship between these factors and their impacts on the company and employees, and linear regression to confirm the existence of a directional effect between the variables. The results showed eight motivational factors, such as monetary rewards, interpersonal relationships, benefits, working conditions, intrinsic rewards, non-financial rewards, competence, and job security, which are directionally related to certain impacts, such as company and employee performance, the company's professional image, the company's reputation, employee motivation and their loyalty.

Keywords: *Motivational factors, impacts, rewards, employees, companies, managers*

1. INTRODUCTION

Madagascar is a country where precariousness reigns. Despite its wealth due to its various natural resources, the poverty of its inhabitants does not reflect this reality. To compensate for this lack of wealth, Malagasy people, due to their paradigm, are faced with the need to find work in order to make up for this shortfall, despite the fact that the reliability of information on this subject, namely the unemployment rate and the employment rate, still raises some doubts. Although the employment rate was estimated at 69.9% in 2018 according to INSTAT [1], the World Bank estimated it at 12.2% in 2019 [2], showing a huge gap within a year. However, reality shows that Malagasy people are looking for work, and those who have found it are trying to hold on to it due to a chaotic environment that guarantees an uncertain future. In this chaotic environment, one central question drives this study: *What are the motivational factors for Malagasy employees?*

The study of motivation remains a complex subject at the time. This complexity is reflected in the difficulty of finding a real and universal definition of motivation, with around 101 theories [3]. Salvatore Maugeri [4] lists around 140 definitions of motivation at work. Fabien Fenouillet [3], through his integrative model of motivation, allows us to understand motivation in terms of various aspects such as primary and secondary motives, predictions, decisions, strategies, behaviors, and outcomes. An analysis of the literature reveals that research into the motivation

of Malagasy employees remains limited. This article therefore seeks to identify the factors that motivate employees, based directly on the perceptions of their line managers, and to understand their various impacts on the company and employees.

Maslow [5], in his hierarchy of needs, shows that in order to be motivated, humans must satisfy five different needs that are arranged in a pyramid shape, starting at the base of the pyramid and reaching the top. These needs relate to physiological needs, safety, belonging, esteem, and fulfillment. However, many critics condemn this theory for its lack of empirical research and lack of solid evidence in the workplace. To counter this, Herzberg et *al.* [6], using the critical incident method [7], asked 200 employees to recall events that satisfied them or dissatisfied them in the company, thereby giving rise to his two-factor theory combining hygiene factors and motivating factors. Hygiene factors are elements that cannot motivate employees, such as the qualities and shortcomings of supervisors, the company's employment administration policy, working conditions, interpersonal relationships, prestige and job security, compensation, benefits, and personal life factors, while motivating factors are elements that satisfy employees, such as the need for achievement, job satisfaction, the work itself, the need for recognition at work, responsibility, promotion, or advancement [4] [6] [8]. This theory is not without criticism, such as compensation that does not satisfy employees or the intangible basis of the study, such as memory.

Classifying themselves within a more organismic trend, Deci and Ryan [9] summarize an individual's needs as three: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. They postulate that this individual is an active being who possesses their own will to fulfill these needs and motivate themselves. Their theory of self-determination focuses on a vision of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in individuals, or more recently on a pair of controlled motivation and autonomous motivation [10]. The more an individual is controlled, the more this situation diminishes their motivation, and the more autonomous they are, the more their motivation increases [11].

As a result, many researchers have drawn on these theories to understand employee motivation in the workplace [12] [13] [14] [15] [16] [17] [18]. What links these studies is the use of rewards as causes of certain effects such as employee performance, job satisfaction, commitment, and employee retention.

2. METHODS

This study is exploratory research. Research has been conducted among private companies specializing in the customer relations sector, as they are currently growing rapidly on the island. This study stopped at a total of 30 individuals due to reaching the theoretical saturation point identified by Raymond-Alain Thietart et *al.* [19], meaning that the information was beginning to repeat itself and was no longer contributing anything new to the study. As a result, these 30 individuals are managers/supervisors with a certain amount of experience in motivation and team leadership.

On the one hand, in order not to compromise the quality of the responses due to the various tasks assigned to line managers, the questionnaire were sent via GoogleForm so that they could respond at a convenient time without being constrained by time or their responsibilities. On the other hand, interviews were also conducted to collect their responses. The questionnaire was self-designed specifically for this study and consisted of three open-ended questions: *In your opinion, what factors can motivate your employees in your company? In your opinion, what are the impacts for your company? In your opinion, what are the impacts for employees?* These open-ended questions were used to understand the actual facts and proved to offer advantages in terms of cost.

As open-ended questions were asked, a lexical analysis was performed to analyze managers' responses in relation to employee motivational factors within the company [20]. These responses were then categorized into distinct themes. Following this categorization, an analysis of the relationship between these categories and the various impacts of this motivation on the company and employees was carried out. SPSS V25 software was used for this purpose. For reliable results, a normality test of the variables was performed using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Our results showed that the variables used do not follow a normal distribution (**Shapiro-Wilk: p:** .000 < .05). Thus, given that the normality assumption was rejected, in order to see the relationship between the different variables, the study was conducted using Spearman's coefficient and a linear regression on ranks.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the research findings related to employee motivational factors as perceived by their line managers, as well as the relationship between these motivational factors and the various impacts they can have on the company and its employees.

3.1 Employee Motivational Factors

By classifying the various responses from managers into their corresponding categories, eight major themes emerged: *monetary rewards*, *interpersonal relationships*, *benefits*, *working conditions*, *intrinsic rewards*, *non-financial rewards*, *competence*, and *job security*. Table 1 shows these different factors.

Table -1: Employee motivational factors according to line managers

N°	Motivational Factors (MF)	Components
1	**Monetary rewards**	Bonus, Money, Increased salary, Increased Bonus, Financial rewards, Salary.
2	**Interpersonal relationship**	Interpersonal relationship, Team culture, Proximity with coworkers, Professional relationships, Team support, Trust relationships, Sense of belonging, Coworkers relationships, Team building, Out-of-work activities, Moral support, Discussion.
3	**Benefits**	Social security, Staff transportation, Benefits, Healthy food.
4	**Working conditions**	Good work environment, Flexible working hours, Work-Life Balance, Weekly meeting, Briefing, Work freedom.
5	**Intrinsic rewards**	Responsibilities, Meaningful work, Praise, Choice, Recognition, Appreciation, Gratitude, Regular feedback, Communication, Sense of accomplishment, Loyalty, Autonomy, Challenging work.
6	**Non-financial rewards**	Non-financial rewards, Awards, Breakfast, Punishment, Animation, After-work, Short-term goals, Long-term goals.
7	**Competence**	Decision-making participation, Learning programs, Skills development.
8	**Job security**	Job security, Job Stability.

Firstly, five of the eight main themes that constitute the various motivational factors for Malagasy employees are represented by monetary rewards, interpersonal relationships, benefits, working conditions, and job security, which contradicts the two-factor theory of Herzberg et *al.* [6], which stipulates that these elements are unsatisfactory and therefore cannot motivate employees. Secondly, in addition to these five factors, two of the three remaining factors concern intrinsic rewards and competence. This competence should normally be an integral part of intrinsic rewards but, due to its significance, must be explicitly stated. These factors corroborate Deci and Ryan's [10] self-determination theory, which states that individuals seek to fulfill three needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which they categorize as fundamental psychological needs. Thirdly, the final factor concerning non-financial rewards aligns with Frey and Osterloh [21], who argue that this type of reward can motivate employees because, according to managers, employees are motivated by symbolic rewards, food rewards, punitive sanctions, and goals. However, this result contradicts Deci and Ryan [9] [11].

Regarding monetary rewards, the current situation in Madagascar suggests that employees seek work and are motivated when money is involved. According to managers, employees are aiming for higher salaries and bonuses, as well as other financial rewards in addition to their salary. Our results also corroborate those of Cameron and Pierce [22], who assert that this type of monetary reward can motivate employees. However, these results contradict those of Deci and Ryan [11], who postulate that financial rewards do not motivate individuals but, on the contrary, diminish their primarily intrinsic motivation.

Comparing the results with Maslow's hierarchy of needs [5] regarding social needs, the first level of higher needs, interpersonal relationships involve employees' need to belong to a group such as coworkers. Still on the subject of belonging, Malagasy employees also seek support from their superiors, enjoy extra-professional outings with colleagues, and collaborate closely with colleagues, supporting Hafsi and Toulouse [23], who state that employees are motivated by relationships both within and outside the company.

By working in companies, Malagasy employees seek to reduce various burdens related to their personal lives, hence the motivational factors cited by managers, such as social security, staff transportation, and food rewards. On the one hand, Deci and Ryan [9] [11] argue that rewards such as food cannot motivate individuals. On the other

hand, Terera and Ngirande [13] and Akafo and Boateng [14] add that extrinsic rewards, including benefits, cannot motivate or satisfy employees.

According to managers, employees are motivated by the company's working conditions, mainly temporal conditions such as the introduction of flexible working hours or respect for work breaks, which can help employees achieve a work-life balance [17] [24]. Some employees also emphasize the importance of receiving feedback through briefings or weekly meetings to help them feel involved in the company's life and in achieving its goals.

Concerning job security, some employees seek stability in order to feel protected and secure within the company [5], generally through promotions that would also give them more responsibilities.

Employees are motivated by recognition such as praise, appreciation, acknowledgment, and gratitude, in line with Abbas et *al.* [18], who assert that intrinsic rewards can motivate and satisfy employees. According to Thomas [25], meaning at work and providing choice can engage employees in their work, corroborating the results of this study, which shows that employees in Madagascar seek choice as well as meaning at work. Deci and Ryan [11] also show that, apart from basic psychological needs, positive feedback can motivate employees and encourage them to engage, confirming the findings of this research that employees want regular feedback, good communication, and mutual understanding. Autonomy and loyalty also play an important motivational role according to managers [10] [24]. This result also shows that employees seek work that stimulates them so that they feel a sense of accomplishment and responsibility for the work they do.

In terms of competence, employees are motivated by learning new knowledge, which allows them to develop and thus perform better, as shown by factors such as knowledge/skill development and learning programs, which enable them to demonstrate their abilities and show that they are capable of making decisions. This result aligns with Abulraheem [16], who asserts that these types of rewards can make employees perform well if companies invest in intrinsic rewards.

3.2 Relationship between motivational factors and their impacts

By understanding the many motivational factors cited by managers and their various impacts, it is important to see the relationship between these factors and the different impacts they mentioned. The table shows the relationship between motivational factors and their impacts on the company:

Table -2: Spearman's correlation and linear regression between motivational factors and impacts on the company

Descriptive Statistics					n	30
	1	**2**	**7**	**WPE**	**RPPI**	**HREC**
Mean	1,9500	1,9370	1,9167	1,9667	1,9111	1,9667
Median	2,0000	2,0000	2,0000	2,0000	2,0000	2,0000
SD	,20129	,13270	,23057	,13419	,23050	,13419
Min.	1,00	1,44	1,00	1,33	1,00	1,33
Max.	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,00
Skewness	-4,281	-2,499	-2,931	-4,281	-2,943	-4,281
Kurtosis	18,773	6,316	8,637	18,773	8,878	18,773
Shapiro-Wilk	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000

			Spearman's correlation		Regression		
Impacts	**MF**	**MADAGASCAR**	**Rho**	**p**	**R2**	**β**	**p**
Companies	**1**	**W**ork **P**erformance & **E**fficiency	,500	,005	,250	,500	,005
	2	**H**uman **R**esources & **E**mployee **C**ommitment	,440	,015	,193	,245	,015
	7	**R**eputation, **P**ride & **P**rofessional **I**mage	,388	,034	,150	,426	,034

There is no relationship between some motivational factors and their various impacts, explaining their absence from the table.

On the one hand, our results in Table 2 reveal that monetary rewards are moderately monotonically related to WPE (**Rho:** .500; **p:** .005 < .01), interpersonal relationships have a moderate monotonic relationship with HREC (**Rho:** .440; **p:** .015 < .05), while skills have a weak monotonic relationship with RPPI (**Rho:** .388; **p:** .034 < .05).

Firstly, monetary rewards play a fairly important role in motivating Malagasy employees, accounting for 25.0% of the variation in WPE (**R2:** .250), while the rest is explained by other factors. The directional relationship between these two variables is confirmed by linear regression (**β:** .500; **p:** .005 < .01). This suggests that the more managers use monetary rewards, the more the company tends to perform well with employees who deliver high-quality work, achieve strong results, and execute various tasks and assignments quickly.

Secondly, in addition to these monetary rewards, the model used for this study explains 19.3% of the variations in the HREC variable (**R2:** .193). Thus, with this moderate relationship, the linear regression confirms it by exposing a directional effect between these two variables (**β:** .245; **p:** .015 < .05). This proves that managers' emphasis on interpersonal relationships tends to increase human resources through a reduction in absenteeism, turnover, and employee retention.

Thirdly, although the association between skills and RPPI is weak, linear regression confirms a directional relationship meaning that by prioritizing skills, the company tends to gain notoriety (**β:** .613; **p:** .000 < .01), as customers' perception of a good image and reputation for the company leads to their satisfaction, loyalty, and trust. The model explains 15.0% of the variations in RPPI (**R2:** .150), while the rest is explained by other factors.

This time, the following table shows the relationship between motivational factors and their impact on employees:

Table -3: Spearman's correlation and linear regression between motivational factors and impacts on employees

		Descriptive Statistics				**n**	**30**
		2	**4**	**5**	**MCL**	**PPR**	
Mean		1,9370	1,9667	1,9303	1,9500	1,9000	
Median		2,0000	2,0000	2,0000	2,0000	2,0000	
SD		,13270	,13419	,13007	,20129	,24212	
Min.		1,44	1,33	1,36	1,00	1,00	
Max.		2,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	2,00	
Skewness		-2,499	-4,281	-3,165	-4,281	-2,499	
Kurtosis		6,316	18,773	12,329	18,773	6,057	
Shapiro-Wilk		,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	
		Spearman's correlation				**Regression**	
Impacts	**MF**	**MADAGASCAR**		**Rho**	**p**	**R2**	**β**	**p**
Employees	**2**	**P**erformance, **P**roductivity & **R**esults		,552	,002	,305	,460	,002
		Motivation, **C**ommitment, & **L**oyalty		,405	,026	,164	,226	,026
	4	**P**erformance, **P**roductivity & **R**esults		,633	,000	,401	,948	,000
	5	**P**erformance, **P**roductivity & **R**esults		,425	,019	,181	,314	,019

There is no relationship between some motivational factors and their various impacts, explaining their absence from the table.

On the other hand, our results in Table 3 show that interpersonal relationships are moderately monotonically related to PPR (**Rho:** .552; **p:** .002 < .01) and MCL (**Rho:** .405; **p:** .026 < .05), intrinsic rewards also have a moderate monotonic relationship with PPR (**Rho:** .425; **p:** .019 < .05), while working conditions have a strong monotonic relationship with PPR (**Rho:** .633; **p:** .000 < .05).

Firstly, linear regression individually confirms a directional effect between interpersonal relationships (**β:** 0.460; **p:** .002 < .01), working conditions (**β:** .948; **p:** .000 < .01), and intrinsic rewards (**β:** .314; **p:** .019 < .05) and PPR, as they put more effort into accomplishing their work, validating the research of Bohnet and Oberholzer-Gee [26], Chijioke and Chinedu [15], and Abulraheem [16], who assert that rewards can make employees perform well, but that this performance must be accompanied by skills and abilities. Among these factors, working conditions play

an important role for employees, accounting for 40.1% (**R2:** .401) of the variations in PPR, as do interpersonal relationships, which account for 30.5% of the variations in this impact (**R2:** .305).

Secondly, improved interpersonal relationships by managers is associated with an improvement in MCL confirmed by linear regression (**β:** 0.226; **p:** .026 < .05), showing employee involvement in their work, their recommendations regarding the company, their commitment, and their responsibilities, in line with Victor and Hoole [27].

4. CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was to identify the motivational factors of employees and their impacts on the company and these employees from the perspective of their line managers. Managers thus present their own perception of these factors and what they imply not only for the company but also for its employees. From their point of view, what motivates employees to work in a poor country like Madagascar is not necessarily monetary rewards, but also the importance of relationships within and outside the company, good working conditions, benefits to ease the burden of expenses, skills, and job security to protect themselves from the current situation in the country. Highlighting the intrinsic nature of employees through intrinsic rewards also benefits employees who seek recognition, praise, and other forms of acknowledgment. By using these factors within the company, managers can expect to see certain impacts on the company and its employees.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study focuses primarily on companies specializing in customer relations. As a result, the findings cannot be generalized, meaning that they do not apply to other sectors of activity, which would be interesting topics for future studies.

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