
An Assessment of Employee Motivation
& Commitment Within A Subset of Argos
Stores in the Republic of Ireland

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Signed Statement

I have read the College's code of practice on plagiarism and I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of an MSc in Management is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, and any work that has been taken from others has been cited and properly referenced in accordance with the Harvard Referencing System as is used by the National College of Ireland

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31st August 2012

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- I am very lucky to have a very supportive family and group of friends who have endured my varying emotions during the process of completing this piece of work and I would like to thank them sincerely for their support and help during this period
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- Also, I would like to thank my supervisor Bronwyn McFarlane for all her help and guidance over the past few months, without it I probably would have had no direction whatsoever
- Finally, I would like to dedicate this research dissertation to my father who passed away a couple of years ago, without you I would not be where I am today

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List of Abbreviations

N C I *National College of Ireland*

R O I *Republic of Ireland*

U K *United Kingdom*

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Executive Summary

This dissertation was embarked on by the researcher as a means of identifying motivational structures in Argos stores in the ROI. The author is particularly interested in motivation in the workforce as it is a topical area in the retail market segmentation, the author is also an employee of Argos thus realised a need for an introduction of motivation to satisfy the workforce to aid a higher standard of work within the organisation. The author commenced his research by reviewing the relevant literature that was available via books, articles, journals and online resources. This literature was used to formulate a comprehensive literature review. The author used the appropriate research methods in attaining information to answer his research aims and objectives. This was completed through interviews and questionnaires as a means of gathered data to identify the importance of motivation in satisfying employees within Argos. These were then analysed and discussed in chapters four and five. The researcher hopes that his recommendation can aid Argos within the area of employee motivation and satisfaction.

Chapter One: Introduction

1 0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the study that is going to be researched

This chapter outlines the research topic and the objectives that are to be addressed as well as the background of the research, the background of the company being analysed, the rationale for the research, and the recipients and structure of the dissertation

1 1 Research Topic & Objectives

1 1 1 Research Topic

“Formulating and clarifying the research topic is the starting point of your research project” (Ghauri and Grønhaug, 2005)

The research aim of this dissertation is to explore the motivation and job satisfaction of staff in a subset of Argos stores in the Republic of Ireland

1 1 2 Research Objectives

In order to understand the research aim, the reader is provided with a clear and concise understanding of the research objectives. The objectives are as follows:

- Investigate how managers within the chosen Argos stores, motivate their employees
- Identify what factors (intrinsic and extrinsic) motivate Argos employees
- Investigate the reward system in place at Argos and to what extent it motivates employees

- Investigate if management use customer and employee feedback in order to motivate their employees
- Are the motivational methods being employed by the management group resulting in high, medium or low levels of job satisfaction

1 2 Background of the Research

In order to research the before mentioned objectives, the meaning of each in the most basic forms needs to be understood

“Motivation is the internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested in and committed to a job, role, or subject, and to exert persistent effort in attaining a goal” (Lynnette, 2011)

“Motivation is the set of forces that causes people to engage in one behavior rather than some alternative behavior” (Ambrose, 1999)

Motivation has gone through numerous changes and developments over the years

Early in the research of motivation, there was a focus on assessing how it affects work performance but now a more practical viewpoint is being taken This involves how goals, incentives and attitudes affect one’s motivation

Commitment of an employee comes in two distinctive manners

- 1 “Attitudinal commitment – that is, loyalty and support for the organisation, strength of identification with the organisation (Porter 1985), a belief in its values and goals and a readiness to put in effort for the organisation

- 2 And “Behavioural commitment – actually remaining with the company and continuing to pursue its objectives” (Torrington, Hall & Taylor 2008, p 261)

Walton (1985) notes that commitment is thought to result in better quality, lower turnover, a greater capacity for innovation and more flexible employees

Employee feedback can be defined as a response or reaction to a certain set of activities or processes involved in the organization or set by management. How important is this process for managers? This is one of the questions that will be tried to answer through the help of this research dissertation

1.3 Background of Company

For the purpose of this research dissertation I have chosen the company Argos as my case study and below is a brief history of the company

Richard Tompkins founded Argos in the U.K. in 1973, it is a unique catalogue retailer recognized for choice, value and convenience. The first stores in ROI were established in 1996, located in Limerick, Nutgrove and Dublin city. In total Argos have a total of over 690 stores in the U.K. and over 35 stores in ROI. It is the largest general goods retailer in the U.K. and the Republic of Ireland. The company's headquarters is based in Milton Keynes in England and they have a number of distribution centres across the U.K. including Avebury, Heywood, Barton and Basildon. Argos prints approximately 35 million catalogues each year and has 134 million customers in the U.K. and Ireland in total. “Argos is the second-largest

Internet retailer in the UK, with over 430 million site visits” (Home retail Group, 2012) Argos employ’s approximately 22,000 people throughout their company and employ an extra 10,000 part-time staff at Christmas time, which is the retailers peak period (Home Retail Group, 2012) Of this total approximately 1,400 reside in the R O I stores (Argos, 2012)

Argos was acquired by Gus plc in April 1998 but then was taken over again by the Home Retail Group who still owns it today in the year 2000 The other companies which the group own include Homebase, Chad Valley, Alba, and Bush The company have been on the London stock exchange since 2006 and in the same year won the employer of the year award at the people in retail awards, which are held in very high esteem in the retail sector (Home Retail Group, 2012)

1 4 Rationale of the Research

As a student in the National College of Ireland, it was required to undertake a research dissertation in part fulfillment of the MSc in Management programme The reason for researching the area of motivation and commitment in Argos stores was that the author is currently employed by Argos and has a keen interest in working and managing in the retail sector full-time in the future

It is hoped that by researching the areas mentioned above it will help to further a career in the retail industry and to create opportunities to do so in the near future

1 5 Recipients of the Research

The recipients of this research dissertation will be the National College of Ireland as part fulfillment of the MSc in Management programme that I have part-taken in and to help future students to understand the areas that were researched in greater detail Also, the Argos stores, as the results of the research may be of great benefit to the organization With these results it may change the way the managers of the different stores motivate and manage the employees and thus affect the performances of the different Argos stores

1 6 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter One – Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to outline the research aim and the objectives of this research dissertation It also outlines the background for the research, the rationale of the research and the recipients of the research Finally it gives a brief overview of the structure that the dissertation will undertake

Chapter Two – Literature Review

Chapter two explains some of the literature that was accessed to help with the research in the areas of motivation and commitment and This was the first real research step of the dissertation and it involved researching through literature about the research areas and seeking out what was most relevant for the research study This chapter outlines the definition and development of the motivation theory, the content and process theories, the Hackman and Oldham job characteristics model, the limitations of the different theories, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and the

importance of motivation in a business environment and the commitment of employees

Chapter Three – Research Methodology

This chapter gives a detailed account of the research methodology that was undertaken in order to carry out the research for this dissertation. There are two sources of data collection that will be used, first being semi structured interviews with four managers from different Argos stores. This will give extensive knowledge of the motivation techniques within the different stores and how they differ from store to store. The second data collection method that will be used are closed ended questionnaires with between eight to twelve questions.

Chapter Four – Analysis of Findings

The purpose of this chapter is to show the main results of the researchers primary research. The questions that were put to the managers in the interviews came about by the author's study and research of the literature that surrounds the areas of motivation and job satisfaction.

Chapter Five – Discussion of Findings

In this chapter the author will discuss these findings using the authors own opinion and correlating it with the research objectives that have been set out and the existing literature on the areas of motivation and job satisfaction.

Chapter Six – Conclusions, Recommendations & Reflection

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2 0 Literature Review

“A literature review can be defined as a systematic process with a view to identifying the existing body of knowledge on a particular topic” (Collis & Hussey, 2009, p 91)

The aim of this literature review is to investigate, evaluate and clarify the literature that is available on the research areas of motivation, commitment and job satisfaction

The literature review chapter will outline the different thoughts and opinions on the areas above from various sources and outline the different theories in each of the research areas, as well as the author’s own critique of the different literature. This section will emphasize the role motivation plays within the workplace and also how the theories of motivation have evolved over time with particular attention drawn to a number of theories

The first section of this chapter defines what motivation is and accounts for the different thoughts and opinions on motivation. Then the development of the theory of motivation will be discussed. The third aim of this chapter is to discuss in detail the content and process theories of motivation, which will include various examples of each. The fourth objective of the literature review is to review the Hackman and Oldham job characteristics model. Next is another one of the main research areas, which is the relationship between job satisfaction and performance. The limitations of the content and process theories along with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation will then be discussed. Finally, the importance of motivation in the business environment and the organizational commitment of employees will be assessed.

2.1 Defining Motivation

The word "motivation" was originally derived from the Latin word "movere" which means to move and therefore the study of motivation is the study of action (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002)

“Motivation can be thought of as a set of forces that energize, direct, and sustain behavior” (Hitt, Black & Porter, 2009, p 297)

“When discussing motivation we often mean ‘why do people act in particular ways?’ and ‘how can we get them to act in certain ways?’ Motivation actually refers to a psychological concept concerned with increasing the direction, strength and duration of people’s work related behaviors to influence the quality and quantity of people’s performance output” (Hannagan, 2008, p 382)

Eccles and Wigfield (2002) state that the modern theories of motivation focus more on the alliance of goals, beliefs and values with actions. The theories of motivation have changed a lot over time and the more modern ones are better related to the work environment.

Dickson and Wendorf (1999) argue that the reason behind motivational studies has been to see what the best motivational technique to use is or what grouping of factors generates motivation to produce the highest performance.

The author agrees with Eccles and Wigfield’s view that the more modern theories of motivation, which are focused on goals and values, are more applicable in today’s world, particularly in a workplace environment.

2.2 Development of Motivation Theory

The theory of motivation has developed immensely over the years, ever since studies started in the 1940's there has been numerous theorists who have had a different view and take on what motivation is really about or what it means. There have been three different approaches taken to the area of motivation, these being the traditional approach, the human relations approach and the human resource approach.

The traditional approach is synonymous with Frederick Taylor who brought about the idea of scientific management in the early 20th century. Taylor proposed that employees were generally economically motivated and worked only to earn money (Moorhead et al 2012). Taylor stated, "It is impossible to get a workman to work much harder than the average men around them unless they assured a large and permanent increase in their pay" (Taylor, 1911).

Moorhead et al (2012) argue that the traditional approach took too narrow a view on monetary awards and that it didn't take into account other motivational factors. However, Hodgetts and Greenwood (1995) claims that Taylor's model can still be used in today's society and that there are signs of use in the 21st century, especially where total quality management systems are in place.

The human relations approach came to fruition in the 1930's. It was seen as an opposing view to Taylor's approach and followers of this view believed that employees were not motivated by money but that they wanted "to feel useful and important, that employees have strong social needs" (Moorhead et al 2012, p 94).

The last approach is the human resource approach, which was formed in the 1950's. This view "assumes that people want to contribute and are able to make genuine contributions" (Moorhead et al 2012, p 94) in the workplace.

In the author's opinion, depending on the type of workplace and the type of individual, the approach one should use will differ. For example, in the technology and innovation sector the human resource approach will figure more predominantly as individuals take more interest in their work. Whereas, in the private sector individuals are more akin to the traditional approach as they work harder because of the monetary rewards on offer.

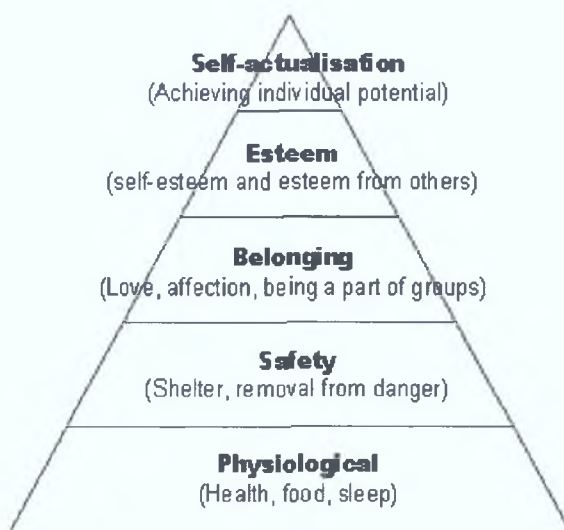
Motivation theories can be split up into two schools of thought, need-based perspectives or content theories and process-based perspectives or process theories. These two perspectives are discussed in more detail below.

2.3 Content Theories

There are four main motivational theories that are associated with the content theory school of thought. These theories concern themselves with the needs that one should try to satisfy and the different factors that influence the possession of those needs. In 1943 Abraham Maslow produced the first main theory of motivation and it has been the most talked about and researched over the years. He proposed that people go through various 'stages' and that they have certain needs throughout their lives. Next came Clay Alderfer, who in 1972 modified Maslow's theory and took a different view on the 'stages' that he had proposed people went through.

David Mc Clelland was the next significant theorist to tackle the subject of motivation. This theory also revolved around people's needs and the tendencies of individuals. Frederick Herzberg brought about the idea of the 'two-factor theory' in the early 1960's. He suggested that people's needs can be separated into two categories, motivators and hygiene factors.

2.3.1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



[Figure 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](#)

In the early 1940's Abraham Maslow developed the so-called 'hierarchy of needs' theory of motivation. The hierarchy incorporated that people go through five stages of needs throughout their lifetime. These stages are:

- **Physiological needs** – these include food, water, sleep, air, shelter. They represent individual's basic needs in order to survive and they are seen as expected or are taken for granted by people.
- **Safety needs** – these involve feeling secure both physically and emotionally. In a work environment, safety needs are met by having job security, health insurance, performance benefits etc.

- Belonging needs – the types of needs involved in this tier include interaction, love and affection both in an individual’s personal life and in their work environment Employees need to have relationships in the workplace and need to feel accepted in order to increase their productivity Being part of a team can enhance this sense of belonging
- Esteem needs – these include internal feelings, such as self-respect and autonomy Esteem needs also include external factors like job recognition and attention
- Self-actualisation needs – this is the final tier of the hierarchy and thus the hardest to satisfy It requires the need for self-fulfillment and knowing one’s full potential and growth

The hierarchy works on the premise that when one has satisfied a tier of the so called ‘pyramid’, then that need no longer satisfies them enough and they need to move onto the next tier Maslow (1970) stated that as a need is satisfied it decreases in strength and ceases to dominate the individual’s behavior The next higher level need in the hierarchy becomes the focus for the individual and increases in strength and assumes the control of behavior

Sadri and Bowen (2011, p 48) state “Maslow’s hierarchy of needs assists companies in ensuring that they offer benefits that help satisfy needs at all five levels of the hierarchy ” Also that “Managers and organizations can use the theory of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs as a framework to develop benefit packages that are meaningful to and resonate with their employees, thus increasing motivation, productivity and overall company revenues ”

However, there is a debate that this theory does not fit into a workplace setting, as there are numerous factors that cannot be controlled but can affect the process of the stages. “Maslow provided no empirical substantiation, and several studies that sought to validate the theory found no support for it” (Kaila 2006, p 71). Griffin (2002) also argues that Maslow’s theory does not take into account different cultures and that different cultures will naturally have different need hierarchies. In the author’s opinion, Griffin makes a valid point since we are in a global environment and that there are different cultures within any given workplace.

“Maslow’s need hierarchy theory has received little clear or consistent support from the available research findings. Many of Maslow’s propositions are totally rejected, while others receive mixed and questionable support at best. The descriptive validity of Maslow’s needs classification scheme is not established, although there are some indicators that low order and high order needs may form some kind of hierarchy. However, this two level hierarchy is not always operative, nor is it based upon the domination or gratification concepts” (Wahba and Bridwell 1979, p 52).

However, useful Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is in motivation, the author found that within a workplace setting there are numerous weaknesses to using it as a motivating framework. For example, individuals may have several active needs that need to be met at the same time. Also, the author is of the opinion that all the needs that are mentioned in Maslow’s theory should not just be met at certain times but that they should be satisfied on a constant basis and not when one need is met then move onto the next.

2.3.2. Alderfer's ERG Theory



[Figure 2: Alderfer's ERG Theory](#)

In 1972 Clay Alderfer developed upon Maslow's original hierarchy of needs and scaled down his five stages to just three, these being:

- Existence needs – these are the need for basic material and physiological requirements such as food, water, shelter and in a workplace working conditions and sufficient pay.
- Relatedness needs – this need relates to the relationships individuals need to have with their family, friends and work colleagues.
- Growth needs - this tier involves the need to develop ones abilities and capabilities that are most important to them.

(Alderfer, 1972)

Alderfer's theory is not just a simplified version; in fact it differs in a number of ways. Whereas Maslow was of the belief that you could only meet one need at a time, Alderfer argued that one can meet more than just one at the same time. Also,

Alderfer's model suggests that one can go back to satisfying a need even if they have done so already whereas Maslow's theory stated that once you have one need satisfied you move onto the next and never go back. Robins and Judge (2009, p.211) support this statement by stating, "Unlike Maslow, Alderfer didn't assume that these needs existed in a rigid hierarchy. An individual could be focusing on all three need categories simultaneously."

Alderfer's theory is similar in regards the needs element of Maslow's theory and due to this it has come under scrutiny as well by different writers in this area of research. Robbin's (2009, p.145) contends, "empirical research hasn't been any more supportive of ERG theory than of the need hierarchy."

2.3.3. Mc Clelland's Learned Needs Theory

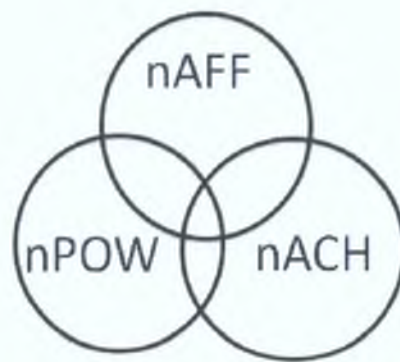


Figure 3: Mc Clelland's Learned Needs Theory

David Mc Clelland proposed the acquired needs theory of motivation in 1961. The reason for this theory was that Mc Clelland thought that the earlier forms of motivational theories had not addressed the area of people's difference. He maintained that individuals needs change and are obtained over a period of time due

to different life experiences (Wood, Wallace, Zeffane, Chapman, Fromholtz & Morrison 2004)

Mc Clelland included three types of needs within his theory

- Need for power (nPow) – is the need to make others behave in a way that you want them to or in a way they otherwise would not have
- Need for achievement (nAch) – is the need to excel or strive to exceed expectations
- Need for affiliation (nAff) – is the need for interpersonal relationships or a need to feel wanted

(Robbins et al 2009, p 214)

The main strength of the Learned Needs Theory from the author's point of view is that it helps managers to categorise their employees and thus they are able to put the right people into the best job that suits their characteristics. However, there is a downside to the theory in that "measuring the needs of employees is time-consuming and expensive, few organisations have been willing to invest time and resources in measuring Mc Clelland's theory" (Robbins et al 2009, p 215)

2.3.4 Herzberg's Motivator Hygiene Theory

In the early 1960's Frederick Herzberg proposed his theory of motivation, the motivator hygiene theory or sometimes called the two-factor theory. The theory focused on two distinct categories, first the 'motivators', these being the factors that can increase job satisfaction. The second category, called the 'hygiene factors', were the factors that could prevent dissatisfaction in a person.

In each category there are five needs that need to be met for an employee to be motivated, these are

Motivators	Hygiene Factors
Recognition	Supervision
Growth	Benefits
Nature of the Work	Relations with Co-workers
Responsibility	Working Conditions
Achievement	Compensation

Although it is very appealing to managers, as it is easy to understand and to implement, scholars argue that it might be too simplistic. Vroom claims that the two-factor theory was only one of the many outcomes that could have been drawn from the research that was conducted by Herzberg (Mullins, 1999)

However, Porter and Lawler (1968) supported aspects of the theory and they believed that the higher paid employees are more likely to be content with their rewards than lower paid ones but that satisfaction from an increase in pay would be short lived

The author agrees with Porter and Lawler's view that the satisfaction gained from sharp increases in pay are short lived, and that a continuous process of smaller rewards would be of greater benefit to the employee as a whole

2.4 Process Theories

As with the content theories of motivation, there are four main theories within the thought of process theories as well. These theories concern themselves with the variables that can affect the amount of effort an employee puts into their work. In 1964 Victor Vroom formulated the expectancy theory and he suggested that the amount of achievement that one can expect drives their levels of motivation. The next process theory was proposed by Albert Bandura and is closely linked to the expectancy theory. Its main component is self-efficacy, which involves how one believes in him/her self's ability to do a given task.

The third theory is labeled the goal setting theory, which was proposed by Ed Locke in 1968. It concludes that the setting of specific goals or targets causes motivation in the workplace. The last theory to be discussed is Stacy Adams' equity theory. This theory focuses on how an employee values the outcomes they receive in accordance with amount of effort and skills that are put in.

2.4.1 Vroom's Expectancy Theory

In 1964 Victor Vroom offered a theory on motivation, which is called expectancy theory. Eccles and Wigfield (2002) denote that expectancies refer to the beliefs about how an individual will accomplish different activities and tasks, and values to the incentives or reasons for doing the activity. He based his theory on the following formula: $\text{motivation} = \text{expectancy} \times \text{value}$. In simple terms, if a potential outcome has good rewards and is highly achievable then this will increase the amount of effort exerted by the employee. This theory of work motivation was based on three significant variables, these being

- Valence – this is the attractiveness of, or the preference for a particular outcome to the individual. Valence is anticipated satisfaction from an outcome
- Instrumentality – this is concerned with the individual’s perceived likelihood that exemplary performance will lead to valued rewards. Instrumentality can be measured on a scale from zero (no chance) to one (certainty)
- Expectance - it is concerned with the individual’s perceived likelihood that effort will result in good performance, like instrumentality expectancy can be measured on a scale from zero (no chance) to one (certainty)

(Mullins, 1999).

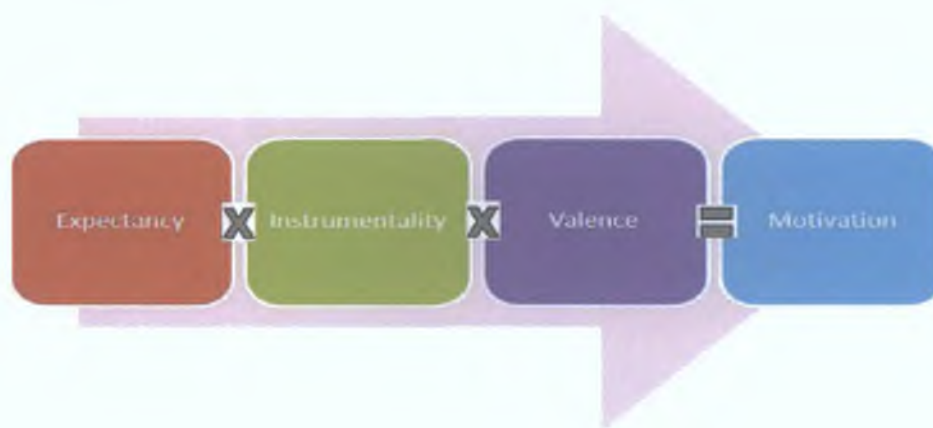


Figure 4: Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Robbin's et al (2009) maintain that while the theory does have some critics, it is however supported by a lot of evidence that says that it is an adequate framework for the area of work motivation.

Heckhausen, Schmalt and Schneider (1985) have refined Vroom's original theory by splitting it into two categories based around the role of expectancy:

- The perceived probability of achieving the expected outcome

- The perceived probability of actually being rewarded for achieving the expected outcome

2.4.2 Social Cognitive Theory

Albert Bandura proposed the social cognitive theory of motivation. This theory is linked very closely with the expectancy theory mentioned before. The key element of the theory is the term self-efficacy, which means “the extent to which a person believes he or she can accomplish a given task in a specific situation” (Hitt et al, 2009, p 309)

This theory holds the premise that when one has high self-efficacy then one has more confidence in their ability to do their job and to succeed and vice-versa. The same idea is seen when employees receive negative feedback, an individual with high self-efficacy will respond better and try harder to rectify the problem than one who has a low level of self-efficacy. “Research to date appears to show conclusively that when individuals have high self-efficacy beliefs, their work-related performance is better” (Hitt et al, 2009, p 309)

Bandura argues that there are four ways in which self-efficacy can be increased

- 1 Enactive mastery – gaining relevant experience at the task/job
- 2 Vicarious modeling – becoming more confident when you observe someone else doing the task/job
- 3 Verbal persuasion – becoming more confident when someone tells you that you have the required skills to do the task/job
- 4 Arousal – this will drive you to do the task/drive

(Bandura, 1997)

Robbin's et al (2009, p 225) argues "that self-efficacy may simply be a by-product in a smart person with a confident personality, and the term self-efficacy is superfluous and unnecessary" Bandura disagrees with this argument, but in the author concludes that this type of motivation framework needs more research

2 4 3 Goal Setting Theory

In 1968, Edward Locke denoted the goal setting theory of motivation. The main premise of this theory is that employee's performance in the workplace is dependent upon certain targets or goals. The theory separates the goals into four distinct categories, these being

- Challenging goals – "A goal that is too easily attained will not bring about the desired increments in performance. The key point is that a goal must be difficult as well as specific for it to raise performance" (Lunenburg, 2011)
- Specific goals – setting specific goals generally leads to increased levels of performance. It is clearer for individuals to know what exactly is expected of them and it also avoids confusion.
- Participation in goal setting – when employees feel that they have a vested interest in a goal then this will enhance their performance.
- Knowledge of results – "People do better when they get feedback on how well they are progressing toward their goals because feedback helps to identify discrepancies between what they have done and what they want to do, that is, feedback acts to guide behaviour" (Robbins et al 2009, p 220)

Latham and Yukl (1974) argue that “goal setting is more appropriately viewed as a motivational technique rather than a formal theory ” However, Huczynski and Buchanan (2001) argue that this method relies on a series of propositions, which permits individuals to explain and to predict work behavior, it is entitled to the classification of theory

In the author’s opinion, although Locke’s theory is generally regarded as not being a proper motivating theory in itself, goal setting is very important in the workplace and without goals employees will not work to the best of their ability When there are set goals and targets then employees will strive to reach them

2 4 4 Adam’s Equity Theory

In the early 1960’s, Stacy Adam proposed the equity theory of motivation This theory states that individuals are motivated and put more effort in if they receive a fair outcome like a fair salary, chance of promotion, benefits etc The individuals will also compare themselves to their colleagues in order to gauge what is deemed ‘fair’ and are they receiving enough ‘outcomes’ in relation to the amount of skill and effort they put in

Throughout an employees working life their expectations change depending the link between their inputs and outputs The differences between an individuals ratios and another employees is called inequity, and thus the individual tries to restore the balance between their inputs and their outputs This inequity motivates the employee to try and reduce the imbalance and at this stage a member of management may have to step in by changing the perceived outcomes (Mullins, 1999)

Adams (1963) proclaims that employees are motivated by a sense of distributive injustice, in other words, people are motivated when there is an equal package on offer to all employees. Jaques (1961) conveys that pay must pass the “felt fair” principle. This is when an individual evaluates his or her pay against that of another colleague that colleagues pay must be in line with what is thought to be fair rate related to the job description.

However, Armstrong (1996) states that what is fair in one organization can differ in other organizations as it can depend on the size of the company, their geographic location and whether they are multinational or not.

2.5. Hackman & Oldham Job Characteristics Model

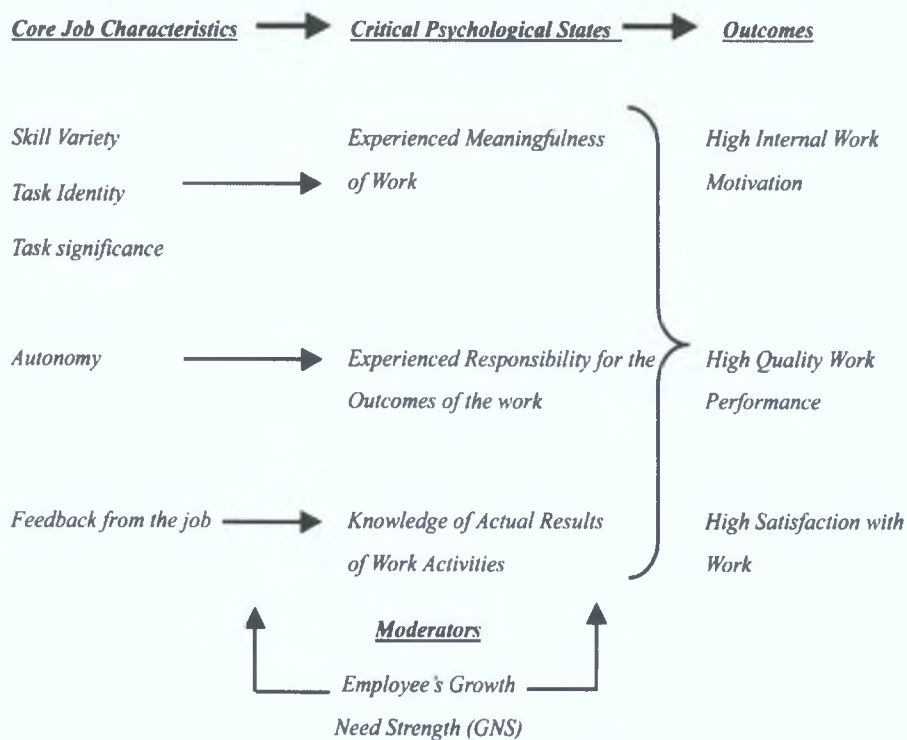


Figure 5: Job Characteristic Model

In 1975, Richard Hackman and Greg Oldham developed upon the earlier theories of job design and came up with the job characteristics model. The job characteristic model follows on from the previous expectancy theories and has generally been seen as replacing Herzberg's model of motivation.

Hackman and Oldham (1992) affirmed that when people are well matched to their jobs, it is rarely necessary to force, coerce, bribe or trick them into working hard and performing well. Instead they try to do well because it is rewarding and satisfying to do so. This theory has three main components:

- Core job characteristics
- Critical psychological states
- Expected outcomes

The core job characteristics has five elements within it, these being:

- Skill variety – this is the use of different skills and talents in order to complete various activities
- Task identity – is the degree to which a job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work
- Task significance – is the degree to which a job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people
- Autonomy – is the degree to which a job provides substantial freedom, independence and discretion in carrying out their work
- Feedback – is the degree to which carrying out the work activities required by a job results in the individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of their performance

(Robbins et al 2009, pp 249-250)

Hackman and Oldham “suggest that the critical psychological states of experienced meaningfulness of work, experienced responsibility for outcomes of work and knowledge of the actual outcomes of work strongly influence motivation, job satisfaction and performance” (Armstrong, 2007, p 330)

Robertson, Smith and Cooper (1992) state that the element of the model is based on the notion of personal reward and reinforcement Reinforcement is obtained when a person becomes aware that he or she has been responsible for and good performance on a task that he or she cares about

“Much research has been devoted to this approach to job design This research has generally supported the theory, although performance has seldom been found to correlate with job characteristics” (Moorhead et al 2012, p 133) The critical psychological states have not been confirmed according to Johns, Xiet and Fang (1992) and the job characteristics have not always been found to be separable aspects of jobs (Cordery & Sevastos, 1993)

2.6 The Link Between Job Satisfaction & Performance

“The term job satisfaction refers to the attitudes and feelings people have about their work ” (Armstrong, 2007, p 264) Job satisfaction and morale are seen to go hand in hand with each other Guion (1958) defines morale as the extent to which an individual’s needs are satisfied and the extent to which the individual perceives that satisfaction as stemming from his total work situation

“A satisfied employee tends to be absent less often, to make positive contributions, and to stay with the organization” (Grant 1998, p 81) It is commonly thought that in high cases of job satisfaction, there are high performance levels However, research has not established any strongly positive connection between satisfaction and performance “Contrary to what many managers believe, however, high levels of job satisfaction do not necessarily lead to higher levels of productivity” (Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001)

Brayfield and Crockett (1955) backed up by more recent research by Vroom state that “Productivity is seldom a goal in itself but a means to goal attainment Therefore we might expect high satisfaction and high productivity to occur together when productivity is perceived as a path to certain goals and when these goals are achieved Under such conditions, satisfaction and productivity might be unrelated or even negatively related ”

“It can be argued that it is not job satisfaction that produces high performance but high performance that produces job satisfaction, and that a satisfied worker is not necessarily a productive worker and a high produce is not necessarily a satisfied worker” (Armstrong, 2007, p 265)

2 7 Limitations of Content & Process Theories

The content and process theories of motivation help management and organizations in how they go about motivating their personnel The content theory concerns itself with individual’s needs and how they satisfy them while the process theories deal with job satisfaction and job design

However, there are certain limitations regarding the two schools of thought. Maslow's hierarchy of needs in content theory has been widely criticized by scholars for being too rigid. The fact is that individuals all have different needs and they don't occur in the stages that are outlined in the theory. "Maslow himself expressed doubts about the validity of a strictly ordered hierarchy" (Armstrong, 2007, p. 258)

The main limitation within process theories is the complexity of their nature. It is harder for managers and organisations to understand process theories than it is to understand the content theories of motivation.

Salancik and Pfeffer (1977) state that both content and process theories are helpful in gaining a better understanding of how individuals can be motivated. However, they caution that there are limitations to the extent that they can be applied.

2.8 Intrinsic & Extrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation are factors that individuals generate for themselves, such as responsibilities and autonomy, and these factors are normally longer lasting as they are internal feelings towards one's work.

Extrinsic motivation refers to the external factors that are provided for individuals by management or the organization, such as rewards, promotions or punishment. These factors are more immediate than intrinsic factors and may not last as long.

Ryan & Deci (2000, p 55) argue that “extrinsic motivation has typically been characterized as a pale and impoverished (even if powerful) form of motivation that contrasts with intrinsic motivation ”

“A substantial body of experimental and field evidence indicates that extrinsic motivation (contingent rewards) can sometimes conflict with intrinsic motivation (the individual’s desire to perform the task for its own sake)” (Benabou & Tirole 2003, p 490)

2.9 The Importance of Motivation in the Business Environment

Employees are the core of the organization and without them it wouldn’t function sufficiently. That’s why it is so important to keep employees motivated so that they can deliver the results that the organization expects. In order to do this management needs to be constantly looking for feedback on ways that motivation and job satisfaction can be increased. All these factors have an effect on how an individual applies themselves to their work. If there is a lack of motivation or job satisfaction then that will effect the way employees do their job and how much effort they will exume in doing so. This will have a major effect on the quality and quantity of work that is being carried out.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter will outline and explain the research methodology and the sources used in order to answer the research aim and objectives. This chapter will demonstrate to the reader the research process and the sources of information being used.

Research can be defined as “the systematic collection and interpretation of information with a clear purpose, to find things out” (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007, p.610).

Methodology is defined as “the theory of how research should be undertaken, including the theoretical and philosophical assumptions upon which research is based and the implications of these for the method or methods adopted” (Saunders et. al, 2007, p.602).

3.2. Research Topic

The research topic of this dissertation is to explore the motivation and job satisfaction of staff in a subset of Argos stores in the Republic of Ireland.

3.3. Research Objectives

The main research objectives in conjunction with the research aim are as follows:

- Investigate how managers within the chosen Argos stores, motivate their employees
- Identify what factors (intrinsic and extrinsic) motivate Argos employees.

- Investigate the reward system in place at Argos and to what extent it motivates employees.
- Investigate if management use customer and employee feedback in order to motivate their employees
- Are the motivational methods being employed by the management group resulting in high, medium or low levels of job satisfaction

The figure below called the 'research onion' illustrates the different research methodology stages that are involved and this will help as a guide in doing so.

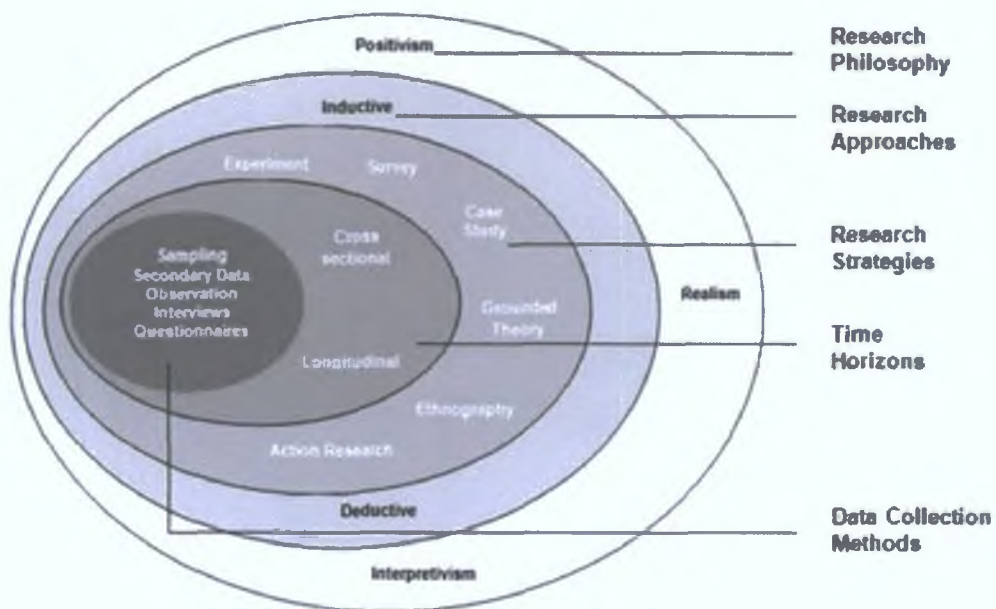


Figure 6: Research Onion (Saunders et. al 2009)

3 4 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy is a framework that shows how one should conduct the research

Philosophy is defined as “the use of reason and argument in seeking truth and knowledge” (Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus, 1997, p 557)

Saunders et al (2007, p 108) states that “the research philosophy you adopt contains important assumptions about the way in which you view the world. These assumptions will underpin your research strategy and the methods you choose as part of that strategy.”

Research philosophy is broken into three different segments, epistemology, ontology and axiology, which all determine the way in which the researcher conducts their research. The researcher will choose the research philosophy, which is most suited to their area of research.

3 4 1 Ontology

“Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality” (Saunders et al 2009, p 110). It examines the way researchers think about how the world operates and what assumptions they make based on their own view. Bryman and Bell (2007, p 22) state “the central point of orientation here is the question of whether social entities can and should be considered objective entities that have a reality external to social actors or whether they can and should be considered social constructions built up from the perceptions and actions of social actors.”

There are two aspects within this type of philosophy, these being objectivism and subjectivism. Objectivism “portrays the position that social entities exist in reality external to social actors concerned with their existence” (Saunders et al 2009, p 110). Bryman et al (2007, p 22) maintain “objectivism implies that when social phenomena confront us as external facts, which are beyond our reach or influence”.

Whereas, subjectivism “holds that social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors” (Saunders et al 2009, p 110) it also holds that as this is an ongoing process, these perceptions change and are constantly altered.

3.4.2 Axiology

“Axiology is a branch of philosophy that studies judgements about value” (Saunders et al 2009, p 116). Within axiology the researchers own values play a pivotal role in what type of research process is chosen if they wish to have credible results. Heron (1996) argues that “our own values are the guiding reason of all human action”.

3.4.3 Epistemology

Saunders et al (2007) proposes that “epistemology concerns what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a field of study”. It endeavors to distinguish between what is ‘true’ knowledge and what is ‘false’ knowledge and “the data collected are far less open to bias and therefore more objective” (Saunders et al 2007, p 103).

“Epistemology concerns the question of what is regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline” (Bryman and Bell 2007, p 16).

Epistemology incorporates three principles of research philosophy, interpretivism, positivism and realism

Interpretivism

For the purpose of this research dissertation and the case analysis an interpretivist view is the most suited Remenyi, Williams, Money and Swart (1998, p 35) describe interpretivism as “the details of the situation to understand the reality or perhaps a reality working behind them ”

Interpretivism “advocates that it is necessary to understand differences between humans in their role as social actors” (Saunders et al 2009, p 53) The interpretivist view is the most appropriate one to use for this research dissertation in the authors opinion as it is “highly appropriate in the case of business and management research, particularly in such fields as organizational behavior, marketing and human resource management” (Saunders et al 2007, p 107)

Positivism

Remenyi et al (1998, p 32) states that positivism means “working with an observable social reality and that the end product of such research can be law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists ”

Realism

Saunders et al (2009, p 599) proposes that realism is the epistemological position “that objects exist independently of our knowledge of their existence ” It also puts an emphasis on the collection of the data in the research process

3.5 Research Approach

The research approach is a general term for the inductive and deductive approaches to research. Inductive research refers to “studying many individual instances or cases in order to formulate a generalized conclusion” (Sekaran, 2003, p 176). This process is also known as a ‘bottom-up’ approach. The deductive approach is described as “interpreting the meaning of results of the data analysis” (Sekaran, 2003, p 176). This can also be called a ‘top down’ approach.

Collis & Hussey (2003) state that deduction is the dominant research approach in the natural sciences, where laws present the basis of explanation, allow the anticipation of phenomena, predict their occurrence and therefore permit them to be controlled.

Robson (2002) lists five stages which deductive research goes through:

- 1 Deducing a hypothesis
- 2 Expressing the hypothesis in operational terms
- 3 Testing this operational hypothesis
- 4 Examining the specific outcome of the inquiry
- 5 If necessary, modifying the theory in the light of the findings

Through the approach of inductive research ‘data is collected and a theory developed as a result of the data analysis’ (Saunders et al 2009, p 129). For this approach qualitative data is collected in a variety of forms, mostly through questionnaires or interviews and focus groups. The data that is collected must be analysed in order to get a better understanding of the nature of the problem/issue.

For the purpose of this dissertation the emphasis will be on inductive research. This method is most relevant to the topic of this thesis as it is important to get the employee and employer's points of view regarding motivation. Using induction as an approach as opposed to using deduction will help gain an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events (Saunders et al 2009, p 127)

3.6 Research Strategy

The research strategy is a "general plan of how the researcher will go about answering the research questions" (Saunders et al, 2007, p 610)

Descriptive and explanatory researches are the types of study that the author will engage in for the purpose of this dissertation. Descriptive research is "research for which the purpose is to produce an accurate representation of persons, events or situations" (Saunders et al, 2007, p 596). This form of research is best suited to the use of quantitative analysis. Explanatory research is "research that focuses on studying a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationship between variables" (Saunders et al, 2007, p 598). This type of research is best suited for the qualitative research and analysis of the case study.

The author carried out both semi-structured interviews and surveys in the form of questionnaires and used the retail store Argos as the case study to do the research on. The researcher used triangulation in their study and it was used so as to avoid misinterpretation due to the different data collection methods that were used.

Triangulation is “the use of two or more independent sources of data or data collection methods within one study in order to help ensure that the data are telling you what you think they are telling you” (Saunders et al 2009, p 602) The researcher believes that using these different methods would give a more in-depth analysis into the area of motivation and job satisfaction

Owing to the time constraints and the available resources of only doing a one-year master’s programme, the researcher thought it best to use the methods mentioned above. If it had been a two-year programme then a longitudinal study would have enriched the research and give a deeper insight into motivation in these particular stores along with giving the researcher a deeper knowledge of motivation in the workplace

3.7 Qualitative & Quantitative Research

Qualitative research is defined as the collection of “non-numerical data or data that has not been quantified” (Saunders et al, 2007, p 608)

Quantitative research is defined as “numerical data or data that has been quantified” (Saunders et al, 2007, p 608)

The use of qualitative research was conducted using semi-structured interviews with managers of two Argos stores within ROI. The reason for this method was to engage more with the study and to get first hand views and thoughts on the research areas. The researcher analysed the data collected by using a thematic analysis. This means

trying to find themes throughout the data as this can give a good insight into this particular area

This type of research let the researcher gain knowledge of the interviewee's views and let them express their feelings on the areas of motivation and job satisfaction. It also allowed the researcher to compare and contrast the different ideals each manager had about the topic area.

Closed ended questionnaires were used for the quantitative research approach. These were given to twenty-five Argos employees in the different stores, which required them to answer 23 questions in relation to the research areas. The researcher was aware that "there is a limit to the number of questions that any questionnaire can contain if the goodwill of the respondent is not to be presumed on too much" (Saunders et al 2009, pp 144-145). A questionnaire can cover a wide population and allows for easy comparisons. This gave an insight into how satisfied and motivated the employees are and what the reasons are for this.

3.8 Research Procedure

3.8.1 Population and Sampling

Population can be defined as "every possible person that could be used in research" (Sutton 2004, p 3475). Sharpe, Peters & Howard (2002) state "the first thing in choosing a sample is to choose a target population to be sampled that permits interesting conclusions to be drawn and to select a sample in such a way that the conclusions are valid."

For the questionnaires the researcher chose a population of employees from the four Argos stores where the managers were being interviewed. This population answered questions about motivation within the stores and their general job satisfaction. The population for the interviews of the stores and store managers were picked on the basis of location and convenience out of the total of 35 stores in ROI. Also the amount of employees within the stores exceeded the amount of questionnaires made available so there was a cross sample done.

For the questionnaires the researcher used probability sampling, which means that “the chance, or probability, of each case being selected from the population is known and is usually equal for all cases” (Saunders et al 2009, p 213). However, non-probability sampling was used for the interviews, which means the “selection of sampling techniques in which the chance of probability of each case being selected is not known” (Saunders et al 2009, p 596).

3.8.2 Data Collection, Editing & Coding

There are five data collection methods that the researcher could have chosen, these are observations, unobtrusive measures, surveys, focus groups and interviews. Picking the right method is pivotal to getting the right information that can be used to answer the objectives that the researcher set out to achieve. There is a five-step process that helps the researcher choose what data collection method to use.

- 1 Determine the approach to be used
- 2 Announce project
- 3 Prepare for data collection

4 Collect data

5 Do data analysis

For the purpose of this dissertation the researcher chose to do both qualitative and quantitative techniques in researching the areas of motivation a job satisfaction, these being interviews and questionnaires respectively Following the data collection from the interview segment of the research, the researcher chose to use thematic analysis as it helped them see if there was a theme running through all the interviews

3 8 3 Interviews

The researcher contacted one of the store managers by telephone as they knew them on a personal basis and through them contacted the other store manager that was to be interviewed The researcher informed them of the nature of the research that was being undertaken and if they would participate in an interview All of the managers agreed to being interviewed and were very pleased to have been asked to participate

Before conducting the interviews, the researcher held a pilot testing with a friend to estimate the approximate length of time the interview would take, any possible problems that could arise and in general to practice their interviewing technique The pilot showed that a quiet, secluded area would be best to avoid disruption and that the questions should be asked clearly and for the participants to be encouraged to speak their mind in order to get the full benefits of the exercise

The researcher studied many interview technique guides and books so as to be prepared for any irregularities and so as to carry out the process in a professional

manager For all intensive purposes the interviews were a success and the participants were very helpful and gave lots of good information to be used for the case study Even though the same questions were asked to each participant, there were varying answers from both of them, which will make for some interesting reading The results of the interviews will follow in the analysis section of the dissertation

3 8 4 Questionnaires

“A questionnaire is an extremely structured data collection method whereby all respondents are asked identical questions” (Mc Coll, 1993)

The researcher used a question so as to target a large population of employees in a relatively quick and easy manner It is also very easy to compare the data and to show its results in a simple and effective manner however analyzing the data thoroughly was a time consuming exercise

When the researcher went to interview the managers of each store, they left 25 questionnaires to be filled out by the stores employees anonymously They were then collected a week later so as to give sufficient time for all of them to have been completed The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions, all but one of the questions were closed ended and only needed to tick a box, which made it quick enough so that the employees were willing to fill them out but still able to record important information

3 8 5 Secondary Data

Saunders et al (2009, p 600) define secondary data as “data used for a research project that were originally collected for some other purpose ” Within the literature review there were multitudes of books, journals, online resources, articles that were used in order to gain further insight into the areas of motivation and job satisfaction As the literature review is the mainstay of the dissertation, this secondary data is a vital cog in the successful completion of this research dissertation

3 9 Ethical Considerations

The author of this dissertation is aware of the importance of ethical consideration when conducting research “Ethics refers to the appropriateness of your behaviour in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work, or are affected by it” (Saunders et al, 2009, p 181) Equality for all the respondents involved was assured during the data collection process The population sample were all of eighteen years and older and each of the participants will sign a consent form thus leaving all legal responsibility on the participant The researcher portrayed the data collected in a manner that protected the individuals and not disclosing their information in a format that would be harmful to the organisation and the individual involved If at any time in the interview or questionnaire the participant felt uncomfortable to continue then they could terminate their involvement immediately with no hesitation It is the researcher’s obligation to assure ethical consideration such as the rights and safety of the participant (Paradoo, 1997)

3 10 Limitations of the Research

As with everything in life there are some limitations or constraints, as was with the research in this dissertation, the main ones being

- Time constraints – it was very difficult to compile a thorough research into such a vast area such as motivation and job satisfaction in the space of nine months, including attending lectures, perhaps with more time a more in-depth analysis of the subject could have been undertaken
- Interview constraints – due to certain circumstances the author had planned to interview two more participants but was unable to do so
- A larger sample size would have provided better results but due to certain limitations, this was unachieved

Chapter Four: Analysis of Findings

4 1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to show the main results of the researchers primary research. The questions that were put to the managers in the interviews came about by the author's study and research of the literature that surrounds the areas of motivation and job satisfaction. The questions were directed at four store managers of Argos in ROI. The interviews answers have been split into two categories as follows

- 1 Motivation within Argos
- 2 Job Satisfaction Within Argos

4 2 Motivation Within Argos

In the case of confusion, the different managers will be labeled Argos 1 and Argos 2. The first question that was asked in the interview was how long have they been a store manager? Argos 1 answered 4 years and Argos 2 has been a store manager for the shortest period of 2 years. The next question asked them about what did the term motivation mean to them. Argos 1 answered, "it means to try and have a positive effect on a persons ability to do their work" and Argos 2 stated that "I learned a lot about motivation theories in college, it is where you affect an individuals behavior to get the quality of their performance up "

The third question was related to the importance they placed on their employees feeling motivated. Argos 1 answered "I don't think motivation is very important for my team, at the end of the day they just come here to get their pay slip at the end of the week", which directly contrasts with Argos 2's answer of "motivation is vital for an employee, without it they will lose interest in their jobs ". The next question dealt with what incentives do the company offer their employees, they both outlined that the

company has a smiles scheme where staff are rewarded for providing great customer service with one smile which you can redeem for store credit and that when the store itself scores over 90% in their mystery shopper then there is a bonus in their wage packet at the end of the year

The managers went onto say that they have no control over what incentives are in place and that they only have control over who gets a smiles reward. They both agreed that the incentives in place were not good enough for some of the effort put in by their employees, Argos 1 said “they are effective to a degree but I think employees want a bit more than a Euro off an item when you get rewarded ”

When asked about if there style of motivation has changed since the economic downturn, Argos 1 answered “my motivation technique has not changed because I’m of the opinion that the employees feel they are still lucky to have a job with a lot of their friends losing theirs” and Argos had not managed before the downturn so he hasn’t had to change his style

They both agreed on the next question that they have not received any training from the company on how to motivate their employees with Argos 2 stating “I haven’t received any training since I became a store manager, I don’t know about before that ” when asked about whether they feel their employees are motivated by monetary or non-monetary rewards, Argos 1 answered “I think its different for each individual, some want one more than the other” and Argos 2 replied “I feel the vast majority of the team are motivated by money but I think in this type of sector that is all that matters to employees ”

4.3 Job Satisfaction Within Argos

When asked do you believe employees are given enough responsibility to make decisions by themselves, Argos 1 answered “to be honest, I don’t think most of the workers want much responsibility, the majority are only here a couple of days a week and they don’t feel the need for having responsibilities put on them” whereas Argos 2 said “I put a great deal of trust in my team and give them responsibilities if I think they can handle it ”

When asked whether they thought their employees were flexible in working in different aspects of the stores functions, Argos 1 replied “I think employees work best when they stay where they feel most comfortable” but Argos 2 answered “I like to change it up every now and again so that they stay flexible so I believe yes they are very flexible in their work environments ”

Finally, when asked did they think customer and employee feedback is important, Argos 1 answered “I don’t pay too much attention to customer feedback unless it’s the mystery shopper result and I don’t see employee feedback as an important issue in the running of the store ” Argos 2 answered “customer feedback is very important to me, without customers where would we be? Employee feedback is also essential, you need to know what your employees are thinking and if they are happy in their job ”

Chapter Five: Discussion of Findings

5 1 Introduction

In the previous chapter of this research dissertation presented the findings of the primary research using interviews. In this chapter the author will discuss these findings using the authors own opinion and correlating it with the research objectives that have been set out and the existing literature on the areas of motivation and job satisfaction. This chapter is again split into two categories, one being motivation within Argos and the other being job satisfaction within Argos.

5 2 Motivation Within Argos

It is clear to see from the answers given by each of the managers that they have two contrasting views on motivation. Although they both know what it means in academic terms, one invests heavily in the theory of motivation within the workplace, whereas the other one does not. Perhaps the difference is that Argos knows more about what motivation can do for employees since he studied the area in college, whereas Argos may not have.

Argos 1 doesn't think that motivation has any part to play in an employee being able to do their job and that they are just 'in it for the money'. They have very contrasting views on how they think employees feel about motivation, although one can not know how an individual feels about something, are we not all motivated at some point?

Argos 1 seems to disregard the idea of motivation within the workplace altogether. The author agrees with both managers in that the incentives on offer will not motivate employees sufficiently to get the best performance out of them. I propose that Argos

look at their incentive scheme and perhaps listen to the store managers who are at the ground level. Instead of a smiles reward, it would be feasible to reward employees good service with different valued gift cards for purchasing items in-store. The author also proposes that the store managers have more control over what type of incentives they can give to their employees, depending of course on what they have done to earn them.

The findings from the interview also show money was highly ranked by both managers in what they think motivates their employees the most. The author agrees that money is one of the most, if not the most contributing factor to the motivation of an employee but that this factor can work in conjunction with other possible motivators like feeling valued and receiving praise when it is warranted from a member of the management team. Argos 1 comes across as a distant management member and is not very hands on unlike Argos 2 who seems to interact more with their team and know how they are feeling and what they are thinking.

5.3. Job Satisfaction Within Argos

The two managers again have two contrasting views on the responsibility placed upon employees by management. Argos 1 assumes the position that the employees don't want responsibilities whereas Argos 2 evaluates which employee could take on more responsibility and gives it to them. The author's opinion is that every employee should have some degree of responsibility, depending on their ability to handle them. Locke's goal setting comes to mind when talking about responsibility, if goals were to be set for every employee each week by management to challenge them and to put

more responsibility on their shoulders than they would take more of an interest in what they are doing due to having more control

The author also agrees with Argos 2's view that employees should be flexible and be able to do numerous different jobs, this will help employees increase their skill level and thus increase motivation and job satisfaction

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

The author believes that in order to gain more in-depth knowledge of motivation at a retail level, that he needs to interview more managers and get a wider range of views and also get the point of view of the employees as well to hear what they think of their managers motivation techniques or lack of them in the case of Argos 1 and whether or not they are satisfied in their job. Also what really motivates them to do their work, is it all for monetary rewards like the managers alluded to or is it something more than just money

Another suggestion would be to cross over to the UK and see are their managers of the same opinion or is it just an Irish culture that we have about motivation. The author also suggests that more work needs to be done around the theories of motivation as there is no one true unified correct theory at present

Chapter Six: Conclusion, Recommendations & Reflection

6 1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to draw conclusions, recommendations and reflect on the author's research dissertation. Dickson & Wendorf (1999) state that the purpose of many motivational studies is to determine what motivational technique is most effective or to discover what combination of factors interact to produce the psychological process called motivation and thus performance.

Appendices & Bibliography

Appendix 1

Participant Information Sheet

Name of Researcher: Sheamus Lynch

Thesis Supervisor: Ms. Bronwyn McFarlane

Title of Study: An Assessment of Employee Motivation & Commitment Within A Subset of Argos Stores in the Republic of Ireland

Research Objectives:

- Investigate how managers within the chosen Argos stores, motivate their employees
- Identify what factors (intrinsic and extrinsic) motivate Argos employees.
- Investigate the reward system in place at Argos and to what extent it motivates employees.
- Investigate if management use customer and employee feedback in order to motivate their employees
- Are the motivational methods being employed by the management group resulting in high, medium or low levels of job satisfaction

Background:

I wish to conduct my dissertation on the area of motivation within Argos stores in the Republic of Ireland. I hope to compare and contrast the different management styles within each store that I research and how they motivate their employees. Argos have a strong presence in the Irish retail industry, and it would interest me a great deal to see how such a big company deals in motivating their employees. Therefore access to the company would be of great benefit and assistance to me for my research dissertation.

I hope that the results of the research that is being undertaken will be of great benefit to Argos, as it will give an in-depth knowledge on how managers and the company itself can improve the motivation of their employees.

Participant's role:

In order to achieve the research objectives of this dissertation, I will need to interview the store manager, which should take approximately 45 minutes depending on the amount of feedback from the questions.

There are 16 questions in total, which covers areas like types of motivation techniques used, incentive schemes, feedback etc. with your permission, the interview will be recorded and transcribed word-for-word. A copy of the transcript can be sent to you if you require or request one and further comments can be made if you feel are of relevance.

If you do feel the need to contact me, then I am available by telephone on 086 8767471 or by e-mail at sheamus.lynch@student.ncirl.ie.

All information given will of course be dealt with in the strictest confidence, and if you wish, you will be given a pseudonym to protect your privacy.

Appendix 2

Interview Questions

- 1 How long have you been a store manager?
- 2 What does the term 'motivation' mean to you?
- 3 Do you think it is important for your employees to feel motivated?
- 4 What incentives do the company use to motivate staff?
- 5 Do you, as a manager, have any control over what these incentives are?
- 6 How effective do you think these incentives are?
- 7 Has your style of motivation changed due to the downturn in the economy since 2008?
- 8 Have you received any training from the company on how to motivate individuals in the workplace?
- 9 Do you feel employees are more motivated by monetary or non-monetary rewards?
- 10 Do you believe employees are given enough responsibility to make decisions by themselves?
- 11 Are your employees flexible in relation to working in all aspects of the stores functions?
- 12 Do you feel your employees are motivated more by performing different tasks or the same tasks on a daily basis?
- 13 How important do you think customer and employee feedback is in enhancing motivation?
- 14 Do you feel that you motivate your employees sufficiently and that they are satisfied within their jobs?

Appendix 3

Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in my research. This Questionnaire is for my Dissertation, as part of my MSc in Management at National College of Ireland. As this is for academic purposes, all information shared by participants will be strictly confidential. Please tick the relevant boxes on all questions.

Thank you in advance for your time.

Section 1 Motivation

Q1 How would you describe your current level of job satisfaction?

Low	Medium	High

Q2 How would you describe your current level of motivation within your job/role?

Very High	High	Low	Very Low

Q3 Can incentives influence your motivation and performance levels at work?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Agree

Q4 What types of incentives do you believe motivate you the most?

Financial Incentives Non Financial Incentives

Both Financial and Non Financial Incentives

Q5 When your organisation offers incentive schemes how do you feel you personally respond to them as a motivator?

Very Strongly	Strongly	Poorly	Very Poorly

Q6 Please Rank the following Factors of Motivation in order of Importance to you

(Please start with 1 being most important and 6 being the least important)

Salary Increases	Status	Promotion	Recognition	Job Security	Holiday Benefits

Q7 Do you believe you're rewarded fairly for the amount of effort you put into your job?

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Q8 How secure do you feel in your present job?

Very Secure	Fairly Secure	Fairly Insecure	Very Insecure

Q9 Would you consider leaving your job for another if you were unhappy?

Yes No

Q10 In the past 12 months how often have you

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Considered leaving your job				
Looked for new jobs				

Q11 How likely do you think it is that you will still be employed with Argos in the next 12months?

Very Likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very Unlikely

Section 2 The Psychological Contract

The psychological contract is the unwritten expectations/promises that exist between you and your employer – the terms of exchange between you and your employer

Q12 To what extent do you feel that the expectations you had at the beginning of your employment have been fulfilled?

All of Them	To Some Extent	Not At All

Q13 Has Argos kept the promises they made to you at the beginning of your employment?

Always	Sometimes	No, Never

Q14 How often do you feel the organisation keeps to their promises?

Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

Q15 When/if the organisation doesn't deliver on their promises how do you feel?

Annoyed	Angry	Betrayed	Understanding

Q16 How often have you

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Criticised the company to people outside work				
Taken a day off work sick when you where actually able to work				
Done the minimum amount of work possible that you think you could get away with				

Q17 How would you rate your performance in work compared to last year's performance?

Much Better	Better	The Same	Poorer	Much Poorer

Q18 To what extent do you work to fulfill the expectations that Argos has of you?

High	Medrum	Low

Q19 How would you describe your current level of loyalty towards Argos?

High	Medium	Low

Q20 Would you defend the organisation if anyone criticised it?

Yes	Maybe	No

Section 3 Personal Information

This section does not require you to give any specific personal information as the

questionnaire is anonymous and will not reflect your job in any way

Q21 What age bracket do you fall under please tick the relevant box?

- 18-19 20-24 25-29 30-34
35-40 40-50 50-60 60+

Q22 How long have you been employed with Argos?

- < 1year 1-2 years 3-4 years
5-6 years 7-8 years 9-10 years
10-15 years 15 years +

Q23 What is the average amount of hours you work per week?

- 1-10 hours 10-15 hours 15-20 hours
20-25 hours 25-30 hours 30-35 hours
35-40 hours 40 hours +

Thank You for Your Time

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