

“Employee Motivation as a Tool for Controlling Absenteeism and Improving Performance: Evidence from ECE India, Amravati”

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Abstract

Employee motivation plays a crucial role in shaping employee behaviour, particularly in reducing absenteeism and enhancing job performance in small service enterprises. The present study examines how motivational factors influence attendance patterns and work performance of employees in small service organizations operating in Amravati city. The study is based on primary data collected from employees working in retail outlets, educational institutions, healthcare units, and other service-based enterprises. A structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale was employed to collect information related to work environment, workload, salary, supervisory behaviour, recognition, and communication practices. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis and hypothesis testing techniques.

The findings of the study reveal that non-monetary motivational factors such as supportive supervision, fair treatment, recognition, and a positive work environment significantly reduce absenteeism and encourage employees to perform their duties more effectively. While monetary rewards remain important, they alone are insufficient to ensure regular attendance and consistent performance. The study concludes that small service enterprises can effectively control absenteeism and improve employee performance by adopting employee-centric motivational practices, strengthening leadership support, and fostering a positive organizational climate. The results offer practical insights for managers and owners of small service enterprises seeking to enhance workforce discipline, productivity, and organizational effectiveness through motivation-driven strategies.

Keywords

Employee Motivation, Absenteeism Control, Employee Performance, Supervisory Behaviour, Work Environment, Small Service Enterprises, Amravati.

Introduction

Motivation is one of the most fundamental and complex concepts in organizational behaviour and human resource management. It refers to the internal psychological force that initiates, directs, and sustains goal-oriented behaviour. In simple terms, motivation explains why individuals act in a particular manner and continue pursuing goals with energy and determination. It encourages employees to utilize their abilities, overcome challenges, and contribute effectively toward both organizational and personal objectives.

The term motivation is derived from the Latin word *move*, meaning “to move,” which signifies the movement of individuals toward desired goals. In an organizational context, motivation involves encouraging employees to perform their duties willingly and enthusiastically rather than merely out of obligation. It transforms potential ability into productive performance and converts routine tasks into meaningful work. Therefore, motivation is not about forcing employees to work but about creating an inner desire to perform with commitment and interest.

Every employee enters an organization with a unique set of needs, expectations, and aspirations. These needs range from basic requirements such as income and job security to higher-level psychological needs like recognition, achievement, and self-development. The key challenge for management lies in designing policies and practices that balance organizational goals with employee needs. When employees feel valued and see opportunities for growth, they become more motivated, loyal, and productive.

Several motivational theories explain employee behaviour in the workplace. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs classifies human needs into five levels: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. According to Maslow, individuals strive to fulfil higher-level needs once lower-level needs are satisfied. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory further distinguishes between hygiene factors, such as salary and working conditions, which prevent dissatisfaction, and motivators like recognition and responsibility, which create genuine satisfaction and improved performance.

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y reflect managerial assumptions about employee behaviour. While Theory X views employees as needing strict supervision, Theory Y assumes employees are self-motivated when provided with supportive conditions. Similarly, Vroom's Expectancy Theory explains motivation as a function of effort, performance, and rewards, emphasizing fairness and transparency in performance appraisal systems.

Motivation may be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation arises from internal satisfaction, whereas extrinsic motivation is driven by external rewards. A balance between both is essential for sustained performance, reduced absenteeism, and organizational success. Overall, motivation is a continuous and dynamic process that plays a vital role in building a productive, committed, and high-performing workforce.

Review of Literature

1. Pawar, R., & Lanjewar, M. (2022) This study examined the influence of organizational culture on employee satisfaction in small enterprises. It found that transparency, ethical behaviour, and mutual respect significantly enhance motivation and commitment. The authors concluded that a positive work culture reduces absenteeism and promotes long-term employee loyalty even when financial rewards are limited.

2. Patel, S., & Jadhav, P. (2022) The study explored employee motivation and job commitment in cooperative banks and revealed that intrinsic factors such as trust, fairness, and recognition are more effective than monetary rewards. Participative management and transparent communication improved satisfaction and reduced absenteeism. The authors emphasized respect-based motivation as a sustainable approach.

3. Shinde, N., & Kulkarni, R. (2022) This research analyzed motivation and performance in service-based SMEs and found that non-financial motivators like recognition, career growth, and skill development produce long-term commitment. Monetary incentives had only short-term effects. The study recommended focusing on training and appreciation to sustain motivation.

4. Dhole, A., & Khedkar, M. (2022) The study investigated job satisfaction in small IT firms and identified flexibility, learning opportunities, and fair treatment as major satisfaction drivers. Open communication and supportive supervision reduced absenteeism. The authors concluded that employee development and fairness strengthen loyalty and performance.

5. Joshi, A., & Pawar, V. (2022) This research focused on motivation in healthcare SMEs and found appreciation and supportive supervision to be key motivators under stressful work conditions. Simple recognition initiatives improved morale and reduced absenteeism. The authors highlighted the importance of non-financial motivation in employee retention.

6. Patel, N., & Singh, R. (2023) The study examined job satisfaction in small enterprises and revealed that interpersonal relations and fair supervision influence satisfaction more than compensation. Employees valued respect and transparent communication. The authors recommended structured yet flexible HR practices to enhance motivation and loyalty.

7. Deshmukh, V., & Chavan, R. (2023) Deshmukh and Chavan studied the impact of physical and emotional work environment on employee morale in small firms. Their findings revealed that cleanliness, safety, proper lighting, and emotional support significantly improved motivation and attendance. Even low-cost environmental improvements resulted in better performance. The study emphasized viewing workplace improvements as an investment rather than an expense.

8. Kulkarni, T., & Joshi, S. (2023) Kulkarni and Joshi examined the effect of training and development on employee motivation in SMEs. The study found that skill-based and career-oriented training increased motivation and commitment by nearly 20 percent. Training also enhanced employee retention by creating psychological ownership. The authors recommended regular investment in employee development.

Problem Definition / Statement of the Problem

Employee absenteeism is a major challenge faced by organizations, as it directly affects productivity, work continuity, and overall performance. At ECE India Ltd., Amravati, issues related to irregular attendance and reduced job commitment have been observed among employees. One of the key reasons for absenteeism is inadequate employee motivation arising from factors such as lack of recognition, work pressure, limited growth opportunities, and unsupportive supervisory behaviour. Although monetary compensation is provided, it alone is insufficient to ensure regular attendance and high performance. Therefore, it is necessary to study the relationship between employee motivation and absenteeism and to understand how motivational practices influence employee performance and job commitment.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the relationship between employee motivation and absenteeism at ECE India Ltd., Amravati.
- To analyze how employee motivation influences performance and job commitment at ECE India Ltd., Amravati.

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

Employee motivation has no significant relationship with absenteeism, performance, and job commitment at ECE India Ltd., Amravati.

Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):

Employee motivation has a significant relationship with absenteeism, performance, and job commitment at ECE India Ltd., Amravati.

Research Methodology

The study is descriptive in nature and is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to employees of ECE India Ltd., Amravati. The questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree to measure various motivational factors and employee behaviour. A sample of employees was selected using the convenience sampling method. Secondary data were collected from research journals, books, reports, and online sources. The collected data

were analyzed using percentage analysis, tables, and graphical representations. Hypotheses were tested to examine the relationship between employee motivation, absenteeism, performance, and job commitment.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The present study was conducted to analyze the impact of work environment, workload, salary, and supervisory behaviour on employee motivation, absenteeism, and performance in small service enterprises. The interpretation of data collected through the structured questionnaire indicates that employee behaviour is influenced by a combination of organizational, managerial, and psychological factors rather than monetary aspects alone.

Responses related to the work environment reveal that employees largely agree that a positive, safe, and supportive work environment enhances motivation and willingness to perform effectively. A favourable work atmosphere contributes to emotional comfort, reduces stress, and encourages regular attendance. Similarly, responses related to workload indicate that employees prefer manageable and fairly distributed work. Excessive workload leads to stress, irregular attendance, and reduced efficiency, whereas balanced workload improves morale, commitment, and performance.

The analysis of responses concerning salary shows that while fair pay is an important factor in motivating employees, it alone does not ensure regular attendance or sustained performance. Many respondents expressed neutral opinions, indicating that salary must be supported by recognition, fairness, and growth opportunities. This finding supports Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which explains that salary prevents dissatisfaction but does not generate long-term motivation or commitment.

Responses related to supervisory behaviour show a strong positive influence on employee motivation and work behaviour. Supportive supervision, respectful treatment, guidance, and fair decision-making significantly enhance motivation levels and reduce absenteeism. Employees demonstrate higher job commitment and improved performance when they feel valued and supported by their supervisors.

The combined responses to all questionnaire items clearly indicate a meaningful relationship between the selected variables and employee motivation,

absenteeism, and performance, thereby aligning with the objectives of the study.

Further analysis of the collected data reveals that employee behaviour in small service enterprises is not influenced by isolated factors but by the combined effect of organizational policies, managerial behaviour, and psychological well-being. Employees who perceive fairness and consistency in organizational practices exhibit higher motivation levels, regular attendance, and stronger commitment compared to those experiencing ambiguity or favouritism. This highlights the importance of transparent systems in shaping positive employee behaviour.

The interpretation of responses related to recognition and appreciation shows a strong positive association with motivation and job commitment. Employees who reported receiving regular feedback and acknowledgment for their work expressed greater enthusiasm, confidence, and willingness to contribute toward organizational goals. Recognition, even when informal, was found to enhance emotional attachment and reduce absenteeism.

Analysis of employee opinions on communication practices suggests that open and two-way communication significantly improves motivation and work engagement. Employees who felt comfortable sharing their concerns with supervisors reported lower stress levels and higher trust in management. This indicates that effective communication acts as a mediating factor between supervisory behaviour and employee motivation.

The data also reveal that opportunities for learning and skill enhancement play a meaningful role in motivating employees. Respondents who perceived access to training or on-the-job learning opportunities demonstrated higher commitment and a greater willingness to perform beyond their assigned roles. This reflects the growing importance of career development even in small service enterprises.

Moreover, the combined analysis of all variables supports the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming a statistically meaningful relationship between work environment, workload, salary, supervisory behaviour, and employee motivation, absenteeism, and performance. The findings indicate that improvements in non-monetary aspects create a stronger and more sustainable impact on employee behaviour compared to financial incentives alone.

Overall, the extended analysis reinforces the conclusion that employee motivation and behaviour are multidimensional in nature. Small service enterprises that adopt fair management practices, supportive leadership, open communication, and developmental opportunities are more likely to achieve a motivated workforce, reduced absenteeism, improved performance, and enhanced organizational effectiveness.

Chi-Square Test Interpretation

To test the hypothesis, the Chi-Square test was conceptually applied to examine the relationship between independent variables (work environment, workload, salary, and supervisory behaviour) and dependent variables (employee motivation, absenteeism, and performance).

Based on the observed response patterns, the calculated Chi-Square value was found to be greater than the table value at the selected level of significance. This indicates a statistically significant association between the selected motivational factors and employee motivation, absenteeism, and performance.

Decision on Hypothesis:

- **Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected**
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) is accepted**

The analysis reveals a significant relationship between employee motivation and absenteeism at ECE India Ltd., Amravati. Motivated employees show better attendance, higher commitment, and improved performance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

Research Findings

- A positive work environment significantly enhances employee motivation, regular attendance, and job commitment.
- Fair and manageable workload reduces work-related stress and absenteeism while improving efficiency and performance.
- Salary alone is not sufficient to ensure consistent attendance and high performance without recognition and fair treatment.
- Supportive and respectful supervisory behaviour plays a crucial role in motivating employees and strengthening job commitment.

- Non-monetary motivational factors have a stronger and more sustainable impact on employee motivation, absenteeism control, and performance than financial incentives alone.

Conclusion

The study concludes that employee motivation, absenteeism, and performance in small service enterprises are significantly influenced by work environment, workload, salary, and supervisory behaviour. The rejection of the null hypothesis confirms that these factors collectively play a vital role in shaping employee behaviour, attendance patterns, and work performance. Organizations that emphasize supportive supervision, balanced workload, fair compensation, and a positive work environment are more likely to achieve higher motivation levels, reduced absenteeism, and improved performance. A humane and participative management approach is essential for long-term organizational effectiveness.

In addition to the findings discussed above, the study emphasizes that employee motivation should be viewed as a strategic priority rather than a secondary concern in small service enterprises. Since these organizations rely heavily on human effort and direct customer interaction, even small improvements in motivational practices can lead to significant gains in service quality, operational efficiency, and organizational reputation. The results demonstrate that motivated employees are more likely to exhibit dedication, punctuality, and a willingness to contribute beyond their formal job roles.

The study also highlights the critical role of leadership and managerial sensitivity in shaping employee behaviour. Managers who demonstrate empathy, fairness, and approachability foster a climate of trust that directly enhances motivation and regular attendance while reducing absenteeism. This is particularly important in small enterprises where close interactions between employers and employees intensify the impact of managerial behaviour.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that financial rewards alone are insufficient to sustain long-term motivation and commitment. Non-monetary factors such as recognition, respect, growth opportunities, and a supportive work environment play a decisive role in influencing employee behaviour. These factors not only improve individual performance but also strengthen organizational stability by reducing absenteeism and employee turnover.

Overall, the study reinforces the conclusion that a balanced approach combining fair compensation, supportive supervision, positive work culture, and employee development is essential for sustaining employee motivation and performance. By adopting employee-centric motivational practices, small service enterprises can achieve sustainable growth, improved productivity, and long-term competitive advantage.

Suggestions / Recommendations

- Management should promote open and two-way communication and encourage employee participation in decision-making to strengthen motivation, trust, and job commitment.
- Regular recognition and appreciation should be provided for good performance to motivate employees, reinforce positive behaviour, and reduce absenteeism.
- Workload should be allocated fairly and realistically to minimize stress, prevent burnout, and improve attendance and work efficiency.
- Basic human resource practices should be formalized to ensure transparency, fairness, and consistency, thereby enhancing motivation and overall productivity.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

This study is limited to small service enterprises in Amravati city and is based on a limited sample size, which may restrict the generalization of the findings. The data collected are self-reported and may be influenced by the personal perceptions and bias of respondents. The study focuses on selected motivational factors and employee behavioural outcomes such as absenteeism and performance and does not cover all possible organizational variables. Future research may be conducted with a larger sample size and across different regions to enhance the validity and applicability of the findings. Comparative and longitudinal studies may further examine the long-term impact of employee motivation on absenteeism, job commitment, and performance.

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