Employee Motivation: A Comparison between Malaysia and UAE

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ABSTRACT

Employee motivation is crucial for us to attain competitive advantage in the marketplace. Over the decades, industrial psychologists have developed theories that are purported to help all managers to motivate their employees. Employee motivation is also proved to be influenced by the local/national culture. In order to know the motivating factors, in the present work, on a personal contact basis, we conducted surveys in two countries, namely Malaysia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Altogether 505 and 335 employees working in various organisations in Malaysia and UAE, respectively took part in the survey. The results are synthesised, and prioritised lists of motivating factors are obtained for both the countries. A detailed comparison on the findings on the two countries is made. Managerial implications of the findings are highlighted and the results of the study are expected to provide managers in developing ffective motivation programmes.

Key words: Employee motivation, Malaysia, UAE

1. INTRODUCTION

In the new economy, replete with its dot.coms, e-commerce, and increased globalisation, a motivated workforce is frequently cited as a hallmark of competitive advantage (Steers, Mowday & Shapiro, 2004). MIT economist Lester Thurow (1992) concluded that in the twenty-first century, those companies would be able to compete globally and successfully which excel in both technology and human resource development. A motivated workforce is the prerequisite in pursuit of this excellence. In the organisational context, managers have the responsibility to nurture a motivated

workforce by creating a proper climate in which employees can develop to their fullest potential. Failures to provide such a climate could theoretically increase employee frustration and could result in poorer performance, lower job satisfaction and increased withdrawal from the organisation (Steers & Porter, 1983).

The term motivation is hard to define due to its relation with human psychology which itself is very complicated. Dewsbury (1978) argues the term defies definition. Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) identify about 140 attempts to define motivation. Pinder (1998) provides a definition that accommodates several of these attempts: work motivation is a set of energetic forces that originates both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behaviour, and to determine its form, direction, intensity and duration. According to its Latin source 'movere' (which means to move), motivation is what moves us from boredom to interest. It is like steering wheel of a vehicle that directs our activities. Motivation represents those psychological processes that cause the arousal, direction, and persistence of voluntary activities that are goal-oriented (Mitchell, 1982).

In today's highly competitive labour market, there is extensive evidence thats regardless of size, technological advances, market focus, organisations are facing retention challenges (Ramlall, 2004). Fitz-enz (1997) states that the average company loses approximately \$1 million with every 10 managerial and professional employees who leave the organisation, combined with the direct and indirect costs; the total cost of an exempt employee's turnover is a minimum of one year's pay and benefits. Ahmad and Bakar (2003) mention that voluntary turnover is a major problem for companies in some Asian countries such as Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, etc. Job-hopping has become so rampant in these Asian countries that it has, in part, become culture. Ramlall (2004, p. 52) writes:

Given the large investments in employee retention efforts within organisations, it is rational to identify, analyse and critique the motivation theories underlying employee retention in organisations.

Motivation constitutes a central element when going through the process of human learning. If the organisation does not possess the ability to motivate its employees, the knowledge within the organisation is not practically used to a maximum. Therefore, it becomes the aim of every learning organisation to find the factors that enable it to motivate its employees to continuously learn and to take advantage of this knowledge to ensure its living (Osteraker, 1999). In today's business environment, the future belongs to those managers who can best manage change. To manage change, organisations must have employees committed to the demand of rapid change, and as such committed employees are the source of competitive advantage (Dessler, 1993).

Since the nature of human beings is widely different, so are their motivating factors. Hersey (cited in Kaufmann, Davies, & Schmidt, 1994) mentions that "people differ not only in their ability to do but also in their will to do." The motivation of a person depends on the strengths of his/her motives. Motives are sometimes defined as needs, wants, drives or impulses within the individual. Individuals at different organisational

levels, with different earning power, may have different motivational values. Hence what motivates individuals at one level of the organisation may not motivate those at another level.

A unique longitudinal study has been conducted in USA in 1946, 1980, 1986 and 1992 to know the preferences on various motivators. Though the ranking of the factors varies from person to person, the conclusions are drawn on the average ranking obtained in consideration of all the respondents. The final outcome of all these studies is the ordered set (in terms of preference) of 10 motivators. The main objective of the present work is to replicate the above study in Malaysian and UAE settings. In addition to the average ordered set of motivators for these two countries, the study sheds light on the significant differences in the preference of various motivators on the basis of various demographic factors: gender, race, age, marital status, type of work, etc.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

?.1 Employee Motivation and Related Literature

Employee motivation has been researched widely during the last six decades and it is prohibitive to provide a complete review due to the vastness of the literature. Here we provide only a brief review of the recent literature.

Steers et al. (2004) review theories on motivation developed since the ancient time by Greek philosophers until the dawn of the twenty-first century. The authors observe that most of the modern theories were discovered in 1960s and 1970s, and these have been modified to a little extent afterwards. This does not mean that we have lost interest in the subject as we have already solved the motivational problem. It is perhaps due to the fact that we have yet to develop further breakthrough ideas that can push us to the next level of understanding. The authors believe that there is a genuine need for ongoing research to develop theories that are more relevant to the contemporary workplace as today's workplace is characterised by an increasingly short-term focus, time as critical performance variable and increasing interdependence among employees.

Latham and Pinder (2005) review the literature on employee motivation developed in the last 30 years giving special emphasis on the last decade. Their focus on review pertains to needs, traits, values, cognition and effect as well as the literature that deals with content of motivation: national culture, job design and models of person-environment fit. The authors conclude that three theories dominate the motivation literature: goal-setting, social-cognitive and organisational justice. Further, behaviourism and expectancy theory have been overwhelmed by goal-setting and social-cognitive while equity theory has given way to conceptualisation of organisational justice.

Mann (2006) reviews the literature on public service motivation (PSM) which is particularly related to human resource management. He says that the research level on PSM is not up to the mark as many questions still remain unanswered. Though he

acknowledges the existence of some types of intrinsic motivation to serve the public good, however, he questions how this motive can be measured and whether or not it can be harnessed as a motivational force. He questions: Can PSM offer any hope to government employees? The author finds with a surprise that most of federal and private sector employees agree that non-profit is the best sector for helping people and delivering services on the people's behalf. On the other hand, Wright (2001) does not find any convincing evidence in support of the following two assumptions:

- · The characteristics of public sector employees in working environment are different from the private sector;
- Those differences have a meaningful impact upon work motivation.

The author concludes that public employee perceptions of weak relationship between reward and performance, greater procedural constraints and goal ambiguity may have a detrimental effect on their work motivation.

Remedios and Boreham (2004) examine the effects of organisational learning initiatives, namely 'systematic approach', 'procedure and competence development methodology', 'tasks and targets', and 'benchmarking' on employee's intrinsic motivation. Overall, the authors find that the employees made significantly more positive statements about their working practices relative to neutral and negative statements. Therefore, in general, employees were satisfied with the new initiatives. The authors conclude that the working initiatives designed to promote organisational learning motivate employees.

Lu (1999) investigates the relationship between occupational stressor (e.g., job demand, degree of control and interpersonal conflicts) and strain (job satisfaction and mental health). He also investigates the impact of work motivation (intrinsic as well as extrinsic) and social support from colleagues, supervisors, friends and family on job satisfaction and mental health. By means of the interview of 300 Taiwanese working adults, the author concludes that intrinsic work motivation is positively related with overall job satisfaction, but extrinsic motivation is positively related with depression. Further, as expected, supervisor support and family support are negatively related with depression, anxiety and somatic symptoms.

Many managers posit that personality of a person plays an important role in his or her workplace motivation. However, trying to establish the relationship empirically is a challenging task, as literally thousands of personality traits exist. Judge and Ilien (2002) decide to focus on what are generally known as the big five personality traits: neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and ask consciousness. Through 65 studies, the authors find that the meta-analysis on the big five traits were positively correlated with various measures of employee motivation. This suggests that the above five traits are important drivers of employee motivation.

Lord (2002) contends that retention and productivity of workers is a function of their motivation. The author examines the responses from 29 engineers over the age of 55

regarding factors in the workplace and their effects on the retention and productivity of senior engineers. In his study, the main motivators are found to be accomplishment, job responsibility, recognition, etc. The author concludes that successful application of motivators improves job satisfaction and therefore increases productivity.

Mani (2002) surveys four types of employees namely, ground workers, library clerks, patient relation representatives and medical record assistants working at East Carolina University to know their motivation. The author finds that good pay and recognition are the most effective motivators. On the other hand, benefits, working environment and co-workers also have effects on motivation but not as strong as the previous two. Milliken (1996) describes the Eastman Chemical Company way to motivate and retain its employees. The programmes adopted are job security, performance-based appraisal system, extrinsic recognition through employee suggestion system, performance feedback, training in problem solving, etc. Kovach (1995) discusses the ranking of 10 motivational factors made by the employees and their immediate supervisors. The author finds that the rankings made by the supervisors are significantly different from those made by the employees. He concludes that managers make mistakes by thinking t what motivate them also motivate the employees.

2.2 Employee Motivation and National Culture

Mehta, Dubinsky and Anderson (2003) have examined the linkages among various leadership styles, motivation and performance on data drawn from a sample of automobile dealers in USA, Finland and Poland. The authors propose that the adopted leadership style and motivating factors should be in congruence with the national culture. Ross (2002) assesses the motivation of chefs in seven New South Wales (Australia) hospitals by comparing the perceived presence of job dimensions and motivational outcomes (private and public). He finds that chefs employed in smaller private sector hospital kitchens appeared satisfied with their work, but this was not the case for public sector hospitals.

Kaufmann et al. (1994) describe the motivation gap among the East German employees mediately after reunification with West Germany. They also describe the measures taken by the government to address the issue. Eskildsen, Kristensen and Westlund (2004) have studied the differences in intrinsic work motivation and job satisfaction among employees with different characteristics working in Nordic countries. The authors find that job satisfaction and intrinsic work motivation have a nearly linear relationship with age and that the employees with higher education reported higher level of intrinsic work motivation.

During the last decade, China has attained phenomenal growth in their economy. Establishment of foreign companies has significantly contributed to this growth. However, there has been an issue of motivation of Chinese workers in these foreign companies. Lu, Child and Yan (1997) report that Chinese managers saw the highest cause of difficulties as being expatriate managers without knowledge of the Chinese environment, and the second highest cause being different management styles. Jackson

and Bak (1998) write: "It may be that Western concepts of motivation are not relevant in a socialist China, where people have been motivated perhaps only to do what was the best for the country with little overlap in practice to industrial productivity." The authors re-emphasise Katz and Kahn's (1978) model of 'rule enforcement', 'external reward' and 'internalised motivation' for Chinese workers.

In another article, Bjoerkman and Lu (1997) report that at a recent round table discussion with the government of China, 59% of participants from foreign invested enterprises (FIE) concluded that recruiting and retaining managers (a significant input into human resource management) was the most significant problem facing FIEs in China.

Leung and Clegg (2001) have found that younger executives working in the public sector in Hong Kong have a higher level of career motivation and are striving to attain additional responsibility and authority in work assignment, while senior executives are concerned with holding their previous accomplishments and competences in their occupational role. The authors have also found that the more ambiguity and uncertainty exist in the government offices, the lesser is the level of career motivation.

According to Al-Sheikh (2001), UAE has a multicultural business environment. The workforce in the country comes from almost every corner in the world. Economic and business environments in the country are liberal, and Dubai, the commercial city of the country is growing at a very fast rate. The Dubai business environment is attractive and many multinational companies are locating and having their regional offices in the Emirates. Among other ways, the UAE government is working hard to prepare its human resources to cope with global business by developing a good educational system, motivating foreign investments and other schemes aimed at making the country less dependent on oil as its main source of revenues. Therefore, it is important that we examine the motivators which can influence the employee's performance in both public and private sectors.

Ahmad and Singh (2001) have identified key challenges faced by Malaysian managers working in various companies. They provide guidelines to Malaysian managers to motivate their subordinates. Ahmad (2001) discusses the common observations on how managers belonging to different ethnic groups, viz., Malays, Chinese and Indians make decisions and motivate employees. Further, the author examines the impact of cultural values of the above ethnic groups on the leadership and motivational practices of Malaysian companies who employ Malays, Chinese and Indian workers. Referring to a number of published works on leadership and motivation, he mentions that (p.84):

...most of the studies with the exception of one by Asma Abdullah are either general or specific to one country and are not applicable to the Malaysian context. Such human resource management and leadership theories may lead to practices which are not directly transferable to other countries like Malaysia, due to cultural differences.

Ahmad and Bakar (2003) explain the relationship between training and organisational

commitment among Malaysian managers. In particular, in one of the five hypotheses, the authors tested the relationship between motivation to learn in training and organisational commitment. The authors concluded that motivation to learn in training was found to be significantly and positively related with affective, narrative and overall organisational commitment.

All the research findings that were applicable to the workers working in the Western countries may not be valid for the Malaysian workers. For example, Ahmad and Bakar's (2003) findings on Malaysian employees for the relationship between age and tenure with the organisational commitment contradicts the findings on the Western workers (Lok & Crawford 2001; Mathie & Zajac, 1990). The authors say (2003, p.181) that:

...Malaysians have different attitudes towards organisational commitment. The older they are and the longer they stay within an organisation do not imply that they will be committed towards their organisation. This can be mainly attributed to the uncertain business environment in Malaysia.

The present paper sheds further light on employee motivation in Malaysia as well as UAE.

3. METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire which was prepared to collect feedback from the employees working in Malaysia and UAE had two sections. This was similar to the one that was used in US in 1992 to conduct a survey to know the ranking of employee preferred motivators (Wiley, 1997). In section A, the respondents were asked to furnish their demographic details, e.g. gender, race, age, education level, marital status, type of employment (public or private), type of work (executive or non-executive), etc.

In section B, the respondents were asked to rank 10 motivators in terms of effectiveness from their point of view. The exact statement in the questionnaire was, "Please rank the following motivating factors in terms of effectiveness from your point of view. Most effective motivator, rank=1, second most effective motivator, rank=2, etc., least effective of the following ten factors will receive the rank 10." In the pilot survey we observed that some respondents used same rank for more than one factor. To avoid this problem in the actual survey, we added the following line with the previous statement: "Please do not use same rank for more than one factor. One sample is (assigned at random): 5, 1, 8, 10, 4, 3, 7, 6, 2, 9".

All the respondents were contacted personally by the authors and their friends who were working in various organisations. Despite our best efforts to minimise the number of unusable questionnaires, we found some completed questionnaires that were not usable in the analysis. The total number of useable questionnaires in Malaysia and UAE were found to be 505 and 335, respectively. Table 1 provides the respondents' profile. SPSS version 12.0 was used to analyse the data.

Table 1: Respondents' demographic information

Variable*	Mala	vsia	UA	ΛE
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Gender				
 Male 	279	55.46	183	54.63
 Female 	224	44.54	152	45.37
Race				
	367 (Malay)	72.96	213 (Arab)	63.20
	54 (Chinese)	10.74	29 (Asian)	08.60
	28 (Indian)	05.57	84 (Indian)	24.93
•	54 (Others)	10.73	11 (Others)	03.27
Age group				
 20 years or below` 	1	0.002	22	06.53
 21-25 years 	68	13.49	88	26.11
• 26-30 years	134	26.59	105	31.15
• 31-35 years	144	28.57	44	13.07
• 36-40 years	68	13.49	45	13.35
41-50 years51 years and above	78 11	15.48	22	06.53
	11	2.18	11	03.26
Highest level of education				
Certificate	142	28.69	106	32.12
ProfessionalBachelors	39 228	07.88	46	13.94
Masters	56	46.06 11.31	156 21	47.27
• Ph.D.	30	06.06	1	06.36 00.30
Marital status				
Single	162	32.14	125	37.09
Married	342	67.86	212	62.91
Type of the company				
Manufacturing	65	13.21	44	13.21
Service	427	86.79	289	86.79
Employee size of the company				
less than 100	134	26.80	52	15.43
• 100-200	44	08.80	62	18.40
• 200-500	81	16.20	60	17.80
 more than 500 	241	48.20	163	48.37
No. of years the company exists				
less than 5 years	80	16.10	101	30.06
• 5-10 years	119	23.94	94	27.98
 10-20 years 	141	28.37	61	18.15
 more than 20 years 	157	31.59	80	23.81
Working as				
Executive	362	73.87	213	64.54
Non-executive	128	26.13	117	35.46

^{*} Missing entries are not considered in the table.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 provides the ranking of the 10 motivators that was obtained from both Malaysian and UAE employees. The table also shows the means, standard deviations and 95% confidence intervals for means. Ranks are determined on the basis of mean values. The lower the mean value, the higher is the rank; this is due to the fact that the respondents were asked to rank '1' if it is perceived to be the most effective, rank '2' if it is perceived to be the second most effective, etc.

Table 2: Ranking of the motivators: A comparison between Malaysia and UAE

Motivator	M	lean	Std	Dev.	Confiden	ce Interval	R	nk
	M'sia	UAE	M'sia	UAE	M'sia	UAE	M'sia	UAE
Job security	4.6250	5.5089	2.8256	2.7372	(4.37, 4.87)	(5.21, 5.80)	4	6
Promotion	4.5040	5.4435	2.7011	2.8373	(4.26, 4.74)	1	3	5
Good working condition	4.2103	4.3531	2.2977	2.7118	(4.01, 4.41)	, , ,	2	2
High wages	3.7996	3.8101	2.8025	2.6434	(3.55, 4.04)	· · · · · ·	1	1
Interesting work	4.9107	5.0237	2.4877	2.6658	(4.69, 5.13)		5	3
Management's help to solve personal problems	8.1190	5.1306	2.1874	3.2156	(7.93, 8.31)		10	4
Full appreciation of work done	5.6270	5.8754	2.5072	2.7062	(5.41, 5.84)		6	8
Sensible company rules, regulations, procedures, and policies	7.1587	7.2967	2.5361	2.5192	(6.94, 7.38)	(*****)	9	10
Providing opportunities to grow through learning					(3.5 1, 1.60)	(1.00, 1.01)		10
new things	5.6567	5.6469	2.5821	2.4059	(5.43, 5.88)	(5.39, 5.90)	7	7
Job responsibility	6.3651	6.6053	2.5902	2.5614	(6.14, 6.59)	(6.33, 6.88)	8	9

From the table, it is noted that for both the countries, the first and second rank holders are the same and these are 'high wages' and 'good working condition'. Out of the remaining eight, only one, namely 'opportunities to grow through learning new things', has received the same (7th) rank.

Six of the 10 factors in Table 2 were included in a similar survey conducted in USA in 992 (Wiley, 1997). The top motivator was observed to be 'high wages' - a finding which had been significantly different from similar studies conducted in USA in 1946, 1980 and 1986. This means that, of late money has been a strong motivating factor for US industrial workers. This contradicts many people's belief, at least in the context of monetary reward. Darling, Arm and Gatlin (1997, p. 1) write:

At one time, money was considered the best employee motivation technique. But today, the use of money as motivation has several strikes against it. The impact of a monetary reward is often short-lived. Non-cash rewards of high intrinsic recognition value - such as merchandise credits or time off - often work better. When given a cash incentive, an employee may spend the money on groceries or the electric bill. If merchandise is offered, however, employees will constantly be reminded of the incentive each time they look at the gift.

Human resource consultant Sullivan (2000, p. 36) writes:

I have never been a big fan of awarding small cash reward as a prize, because it has no 'trophy' value. If you hand a team member a \$29 bill as a gesture of gratitude, the emotional buzz lasts anywhere from 12-15 seconds. The cash goes into the wallet and disappears.

Despite the above statements, money is still considered as an effective motivator. Wiley (1997, p. 271) justifies the top rank for 'high wages' in a 1992 survey as follows:

Over these years the industries and economics changed, and so did the workers values. By 1946 and 1986, after almost 40 years of relative prosperity, workers had experienced a significant rise in their living standards. By the 1990s after the acquisitions and mergers of the previous three decades in response to intensified competition, it is not surprising that the importance placed on various motivational factors had changed.

Though 'good working condition' holds the same position for both Malaysia and UAE, however, its standard deviations show Malaysian employees are more consistent in singling out this factor in comparison to their UAE counterparts.

For Malaysian employees, the 3rd effective motivator is 'promotion', whereas it holds 5th position for UAE employees. On the other hand, for Malaysians, 'interesting work' is the 5th but it is the 3rd for UAE employees. Further, UAE employees are less concerned on 'job security' (6th rank) compared to Malaysian (4th rank) counterparts. Surprisingly, employees of both the countries have not favoured 'full appreciation of work done' highly, compared to the other factors. In the previously mentioned US survey, 'appreciation' is the second most effective motivator. In fact, it is next to 'high wages' and ahead of 'job security' and 'promotion'.

One significant difference on motivating factors between Malaysian and UAE employees is 'management's help to solve personal problems'. This is least favoured by Malaysian employees, whereas to the UAE employees, it is ahead of many of cited motivating factors, in particular, it is favoured in lieu of 'promotion' and 'job security'. However, the UAE employees are not consistent in choosing this factor as the corresponding standard deviation is the highest. On the other hand, Malaysian employees are relatively more consistent in favour of not choosing this as a motivator (standard deviation is the least for Malaysian employees). As for the findings of Wiley (1997), this is also least favoured to the US employees. The two factors: 'job responsibility' and 'sensible company rules, regulations, procedures and policies' are relatively less appealing given other choices as both are positioned almost at the end of the list of preference ranking.

Overall, do the ranks for both the countries differ significantly? Spearman's rank correlation coefficient for the two sets of ranks is found to be 0.673 at p = 0.033. This shows that the ranks are correlated at 5% significance level.

Tables 3(a) and 3(b) show the preference level on the five most effective motivators for Malaysian and UAE employees, respectively.

Table 3(a): Preference level on the five most effective motivators from Malaysian perspective

Motivator Preference	1	2	3	4	5
1st	141 (27.9)	55 (10.9)	56	90	49
2nd	96	84	(11.1) 105	(17.8) 51	(9.7)
3rd	(19.0)	(16.6)	(20.8)	(10.1)	(9.9)
	46	87	59	68	65
4th	(9.1)	(17.2)	(11.7)	(13.5)	(12.9)
	47	74	64	57	60
5th	(9.3)	(14.7)	(12.7)	(11.3)	(11.9)
	37	62	47	53	85
	(7.3)	(12.3)	(9.30)	(10.5)	(16.9)

Legend: 1 = High wages, 2 = Good working condition, 3 = Promotion, 4 = Job security, 5 = Interesting work.

Table 3(b): Preference level on the five most effective motivators from UAE perspective

Motivator reference	1	2	3	4	. 5
1st	68	59	29	58	31
2nd	(20.2) 75	(17.5) 46	(8.6)	(17.2) 44	(9.2) 33
3rd	(22.3) 54	(13.6) 47	(12.2) 47	(13.1) 36	(9.8)
4th	(16.0) 32	(13.9) 50	(13.9) 41	(10.7) 24	37 (11.0) 36
5th	(9.5) 23 (6.8)	(14.8) 27 (8.0)	(12.2) 40 (11.9)	(7.1) 23 (6.8)	(10.7) 42 (12.5)

zend: 1 = High wages, 2 = Good working condition, 3 = Interesting work, 4 = Management's help, 5 = Promotion.

For the Malaysian employees, we observe that 27.9% of the respondents articulated 'high wages' as their No. 1 motivator; in fact, nearly half (46.9%) of the respondents have said 'high wages' as either their No. 1 or No. 2 motivator. It is to be noted that no other motivator comes even closer to 'high wages'. Similar is the observation for UAE employees. The percentage of UAE employees who said 'high wages' as the No. 1 or No. 2 motivator is 42.5%. For 'good working condition' and 'management's help to solve personal problems', the percentage of UAE respondents who stated them as no. 1 or no. 2 motivator is almost same (31.1% and 30.3%, respectively). For the Malaysian respondents, the highest and the second highest frequency correspond to 'high wages' and 'promotion'. This shows again that money has been a predominantly preferred notivator for Malaysian employees. This is contrary for the UAE case, though 'high wages' is preferred, 'promotion' has been pushed behind the other factors (Table 3(b)).

Overall, for UAE employees, rank '10' which corresponds to 'sensible company rules, regulations, procedures and policies' received the maximum frequency, 87 (25.8%). This shows again that the factor is least favoured by the UAE employees.

5. ANALYSIS BASED UPON DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Demographic factors of the respondents, e.g., gender, age, education level, etc. may affect their preference on the motivating factors (here and also before we have used the term 'preference' to indicate that if the motivating factors are offered to the employees, then individually they can rank them (factors) in terms of effectiveness to motivate them). Kovach (1980, p.57) writes:

Individuals at different organisation levels, with different earning power, may have different motivational values. Hence what motivates individuals at one level of the organisation may not motivate those at another level. This necessitates differentiating by income level and other demographic factors when analysing attitudes for motivational purposes.

We have computed ranks of the previously mentioned 10 motivating factors separately based upon: gender (male, female), race (Malay-Chinese-Indian for Malaysia and Arab-Asian-Indian for UAE), age (21-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-50 years), education (certificate, professional, bachelors, masters, Ph.D.), marital status (married, single), employment status (termed as 'working as') (executive, non-executive). Details are shown in Table 4(a) and Table 4(b). The tables confirm that the overall ranking of all the 10 factors as shown in Table 2 are 'more or less' corroborated by the people belonging to different levels of the demographic factors for both the countries. Take the example of 'high wages'. Its overall rank is '1' (Table 2) and this has been the rank for majority of the people across various demographic factors (Tables 4(a) and 4(b)). The rank of 'management's help', which is 10 across all types of respondents in Malaysia, is exactly the same as the overall rank. As for the UAE case, a similar observation holds true for 'sensible company rules'.

For Malaysia, the overall ranks of 'sensible company rules' and 'job responsibility' are '9' and '8', respectively. The corresponding rows in Table 4(a) reveal a uniform pattern that matches with the above overall ranks. For UAE, the overall ranks of 'job responsibility' and 'opportunities to grow' are '9' and '7', respectively and these ranks are nearly preserved across various levels of all the demographic factors (Table 4(b)). In essence, the overall ranks of all the 10 factors for both the countries match with the ranks obtained for various levels of any of the demographic factors.

For every combination of levels within each factor, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (RCC) has been computed and corresponding non-parametric hypothesis test performed using SPSS version 12.0. The results are shown in Table 5 for both the countries. The first coefficient corresponds to Malaysia and the second one for UAE. For Malaysia, all the RCCs are significant at p = 0.01. The minimum and maximum RCCs are found to be 0.782 (Malay and Chinese) and 0.988 (professionals and

bachelors), respectively. The results widely show that the ranks are correlated, i.e. there is no significant difference (except Malays and Chinese) in the preference on the factors. This means that in the Malaysian context, the ranking of the factors is statistically the same, i.e. it does not depend upon the demographic factors: gender, race, age, education level, marital and employment status.

However, for UAE, relatively less consistency has been observed in the ranks provided by the respondents for individual demographic factors. For example, ranks are significantly different for (Arab, Indian), (26-30 years, 41-50 years), (31-35 years, 41-50 years), (35-40 years, 41-50 years), (certificate, masters), (professional, masters), and (bachelors, masters). From the RCCs, it appears that the preference structure of age group '41-50 years' and 'master degree holders' are significantly different from other members of the respective demographic factor. From the RCCs for UAE, we also observe that the ranks provided by (male, female), (Arab, Asian), (Asian, Indian), (single, married) and (executives, non executives) are statistically the same.

Table 4(a): Ranking of the motivators based upon demographic factors (Malaysia)

No.	Motivator	Ger	nder	-	Race			,	Age				Edu	ıcati	on			rital tus		rking Is
		G ₁	G ₂	R ₁	R ₂	R3	Aı	A_2	A ₃	A ₄	A ₅	E ₁	E ₂	E ₃	E ₄	E ₅	Mı	M ₂	W ₁	W ₂
1	Job security	4	3	5	5	4	5	4	4	2	3	4	4	4	2	2	4	4	4	3
2	Promotion	2	5	3	4	2	3	5	2	4	2	2	2	3	4	5	5	3	3	4
3	Condition	3	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	3	4	1	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	1
4	High wages	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	2
5	Int. work	5	4	4	7	6	4	3	5	5	6	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	5	5
6	Help	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
7	Appreciation	7	6	6	6	7	6	7	6	7	5	6	7	7	6	6	6	7	7	6
8	Rules	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	9	9
9	Opportunity	6	7	7	2	5	8	6	7	6	7	7	6	6	7	7	7	6	6	8
10	Responsibility	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	9	8	8	8	7

Legend: $G_1 = Male$, $G_2 = Female$; $R_1 = Malay$, $R_2 = Chinese$, $R_3 = Indian$; $A_1 = 21-25$, $A_2 = 26-30$, $A_3 = 31-35$, $A_4 = 36-40$, $A_5 = 40-50$ years; $E_1 = Certificate$, $E_2 = Professional$, $E_3 = Bachelors$, $E_4 = Masters$, $E_5 = Ph.D.$; $M_1 = Single, M_2 = Married; W_1 = Executive, W_2 = Non-executive.$

Table 4(b): Ranking of the motivators based upon demographic factors (UAE)

No.	Motivator	Ger	nder		Race	9			Age				Educ	ation	1	Mar		Worl	_
		G ₁	G ₂	R1	\mathbb{R}_2	R ₃	A ₁	A_2	Аз	A ₄	A 5	E ₁	E ₂	Ез	E ₄	M ₁	M2	W ₁	W ₂
1	Job security	6	5	4	7	7	6	6	5	5	6	7	7	5	2	5	6	5	8
2	Promotion	5	7	3	5	8	4	4	8	7	5	6	4	6	4	6	5	6	6
3	Condition	2	2	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	2	1
4	High wages	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	2
5	Int. work	3	3	5	3	3	3	5	4	3	3	4	3	4	6	2	4	4	3
6	Help	4	4	6	4	2	5	3	3	4	10	3	5	3	10	4	3	3	4
7	Appreciation	7	8	8	6	6	8	8	6	8	4	8	6	8	5	8	8	8	5
8	Rules	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	8	10	10	10	10
9	Opportunity	8	6	7	8	5	7	7	7	6	8	5	8	7	9	7	7	7	7
10	Responsibility	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	7	9	9	9	7	9	9	9	9

Legend: $G_1 = Male$, $G_2 = Female$; $R_1 = Arab$; $R_2 = Asian$, $R_3 = Indian$; $A_1 = 21-25$, $A_2 = 26-30$, $A_3 = 31-35$, $A_4 = 36-40$, $A_5 = 40-50$ years; $E_1 = Certificate$, $E_2 = Professional$, $E_3 = Bachelors$, $E_4 = Masters$; $M_1 = Single$, $M_2 = Married$; $W_1 = Executive$, $W_2 = Non-executive$.

Table 5: Spearman's rank correlation coefficients between each pair of levels of the demographic factors

Gender		Race						Age					
G ₁ G ₂	R ₁ R ₂	R ₁ R ₃	R ₂ R ₃	A ₁ A ₂	A ₁ A ₃	A ₁ A4	A ₁ A ₅	A ₂ A ₃	A2A4	A2A5	A ₃ A ₄	A 3 A 5	A ₄ A ₅
0.939 0.915	0.842 0.782	0.600 0.927	0.842 0.903	0.952 0.905	0.842 0.939	0.927 0.867	0.697 0.867	0.867	0.903	0.527 0.830	0.952 0.939	0.564 0.976	0.588 0.927

					Education					MS	WA
E1E2	E ₁ E ₃	E1E4	E ₁ E ₅	E ₂ E ₃	E ₂ E ₄	E ₂ E ₅	E ₃ E ₄	E3E5	E4E5	M ₁ M ₂	W ₁ W ₂
0.855 0.939	0.855 0.939	0.952 0.952	0.903	0.879 0.988	0.576 0.939	0.842	0.442 0.952	0.891	0.927	0.952 0.939	0.867 0.939

Absence of significant difference in preferences across various demographic factors does not mean that the people with respect to one particular demographic factor, e.g. gender, i.e. males and females concur on the same rank for all the 10 motivators. In fact, this is not the case. Details are discussed in the following:

Gender: Kovach (1995) finds that in organisations, female employees place greater importance on interpersonal relationships and communication than male employees. Betz and O'Connel (1989) and Elizur (1994) also concur. According to them, men express greater concern than women for instrumental work outcomes (such as income and other benefits), while women placed greater emphasis on affective work outcomes (such as opportunities to interact with people, relations with colleagues, supervisors and others).

For Malaysia, though the rank correlation coefficient between the ranks of all the 10 factors made by males and females is 0.915, however, they placed promotion in ranks 2nd and 5th, respectively (see Table 4(a)). Statistically, males demand promotion more than females (p<0.001). On the other hand, females want the option 'sensible company rules' more than males (p<0.001), despite the fact that both groups have placed the same rank (9th) on the option. This shows that the groups differ in terms of mean values (males: 7.50, females: 6.70). No significant difference in gender was observed in any of the remaining eight factors. For UAE, the consistency in the ranks provided by male and female is higher compared to Malaysia. No statistical difference is observed in the ranks in any of the 10 factors.

Race: The factor 'opportunities to grow' has been ranked as 7th, 2nd and 5th by Malays, Chinese and Indians, respectively (refer to Table 4(a)). This shows that Chinese strongly favour the factor compared to Malays and Indians (p = 0.001). In fact, to the Chinese, the first five motivating factors (arranged in accordance of preference, vide Table 4(a)) are: 'high wages', 'opportunities to grow', 'good working conditions', 'promotion' and 'job security'. On the matter of promotion, Indians (2nd rank) prefer the motivator significantly (p<0.05) more than the Chinese (4th rank). Though Malays rank the factor 3rd, no statistical difference between Malays and Chinese was found. On 'interesting work', Malays prefer the factor more than Chinese and Indians.

For UAE, the mean value of 'sensible company rules' for Arabs, Asians and Indians, are 7.2535, 8.3793 and 7.2619, respectively. Statistical test shows that Arabs and Indians prefer the factor more than Asians (p = 0.003 and 0.016, respectively). Though Arabs and Indians are same with respect to 'sensible company rules', they differ in 'job security', 'promotion' and 'management's help'. 'Job security' and 'promotion' are preferred by the Arabs over Indians (p = 0.005 and 0.004 respectively), whereas Indians need 'management's help' more than Arabs (p = 0.001).

Education: For Malaysia, it is interesting to observe that certificate holders have placed 'high wages' in the 3rd position behind 'good working conditions' and 'promotion', whereas professionals, bachelors and masters degree holders' first preference is 'high wages'. Statistically (p<0.05) these three groups of respondents prefer 'high wages' more than certificate holders. We also observe that certificate and Ph.D. holders place the same rank, i.e. 3rd for 'high wages' and 1st rank for 'good working conditions'. Further, Ph.D. degree holders prefer 'good working conditions' more than bachelor and master degree holders (in both the cases, p<0.05). However, on the same factor, we did not find significant difference between certificate holders and bachelors (p = 0.391) or masters (p = 0.240).

For UAE, master degree holders are different from the rest, namely, certificate, professional, and bachelor degree holders. We have not considered Ph.D. degree holders in the analysis as there was only one respondent holding Ph.D. qualification. We observe that certificate, professional and bachelor degree holders require 'management's help' more than master degree holders (p<0.05). On the other hand, master degree holders require 'job security' more than the other three categories of respondents (p<0.05).

Marital status: Married and unmarried people significantly differ in 'promotion' (p = 0.007) (Malaysian case). As expected, married people prefer the option more than the unmarried people. No other significant difference is observed in any of the remaining factors. For UAE, married and unmarried people also differ significantly in only one factor, i.e., 'interesting work'. Single people prefer 'interesting work' more than married people (p = 0.011).

Employment status: For Malaysia, we find that executives prefer 'promotion' (p = 0.011) and 'opportunities to grow' (p = 0.037) more than non-executives. On the other hand, non-executives prefer 'management's help to solve personal problems' (p<0.001), 'sensible company rules' (p = 0.023) more than the executives. For UAE, executives prefer 'job security' (p = 0.045) and high wages (p = 0.032) more than non-executives. On the other hand, non-executives prefer 'interesting work' (p = 0.047)more than executives.

Age: For Malaysia, many significant differences are observed of which some are mentioned below. Except 21-25 years group, the other groups have placed first rank to the 'high wages'. However, significant difference (p = 0.023) exists only between 21-25 years group and 26-30 years groups. The group 36-40 years prefer 'job security' more than the group 21-25 years (p = 0.018). The group 26-30 years prefers the motivator

'interesting work' more than the group 41-50 years (p=0.001). For UAE, significant difference also exists in a number of cases. For example, age group 21-25 years requires 'promotion' (p=0.014) more than the age group 31-35 years. The age group 26-30 years and 31-35 years require 'management's help' (p=0.036 and p=0.043) more than the people in the age group 41-50 years.

As it is observed above, there are differences in preference structure across various levels of all the demographic factors. For demographic factors which have more than two levels (e.g. race, age and education), Duncan's multiple comparison test has been performed to know which pair of levels differ significantly. Duncan's homogenous subsets are shown in Tables 6(a) and 6(b). As expected, the previous observations are attested in the test. For example, on 'opportunities to grow', Malay and Indians belong to one subset, whereas Chinese belong to another. Similarly and somewhat surprisingly, certificate and Ph.D. holders belong to the same subset for most of the motivating factors.

Table 6(a): Duncan's multiple comparison test results (Malaysia)

Demographic factor	Motivator		Subsets for alph	na = 0.05
		1	2	3
Race	Promotion	R ₃ , R ₁ , R ₂ *	R1, R2	
	High wages	R2, R3, R1	R3, R1	
	Interesting work	R1, R2	R2, R3	
	Help	R1, R3	R1, R3, R2	
	Appreciation	R2, R1	R₁, R₃	
	Opportunity	R ₂	R ₁ , R ₃	
	Premium	R1, R3	R ₃ , R ₂	
Age	Promotion	A ₅ , A ₄ , A ₃ , A ₁	A ₄ , A ₃ , A ₁ , A ₂	
	Interesting work	A2, A4, A1		A4 A1 A3 A4
	Help	A1, A4, A3	A ₄ , A ₁ , A ₃ , A ₂ , A ₅	7 11, 7 11, 7 10, 7 10
Education	Working condition	E5, E1	E1, E2, E3, E4	
	High wages	E2, E3, E4	E ₃ , E ₄ , E ₅ , E ₁	
	Rules		E ₅ , E ₁ , E ₃ , E ₂	

Table 6 (b): Duncan's multiple comparison test results (UAE)

Demographic Factor	Motivator	Subsets for alp	ha = 0.05
		1	2
Race	Interesting work	R3, R2	R3, R2, R1
	Appreciation	R ₂	R2, R1, R3
Education	Security	R ₄	R3, R1, R2
	Working condition	R4, R2	R ₂ , R ₁ , R ₃
	Management's help	R ₃ , R ₁ , R ₂	R ₄

Unlike Malaysia, for UAE, not many subsets are created for various motivators. As mentioned before, for education, master degree holders belong to one subset and the rest (certificate, professional and bachelor) belong to another.

6. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

How can we motivate people to work? How can we create a situation in which people can achieve their personal goals while fulfilling the goals of the organisation? These questions are frequently asked by managers. Yet, they make mistakes by assuming what motivate them, also motivate others. Motivation is an intrinsic matter to a human being. Since human beings are of widely varied natured, so are their motivators. Schein (1980) saw human nature as complex with human needs and motivation varying according to the different circumstances people face, their life experiences, expectations and age. Rowley (1996, p. 11) writes:

The effective manager needs to recognise that different motivators are appropriate for different staff and that different staff will demonstrate differing inherent levels of motivation in setting their own targets and striving towards them.

Organisational resources are scarce and all efforts should be made to utilise these resources in the best possible manner. The staff development plan is expected to motivate the staff, but if it does not, then there is something wrong. Herzberg, Maunser and Snyderman (1959) proposed that an employee's motivation to work is best understood when the respective attitude of that employee is understood. Wiley (1997) argues that for motivational problems, the best source of information is the employee. Employees must be asked on a regular basis what sparks and sustains their desire to work. Their responses may lead the employer to redesign jobs, increase pay, change the working environment or give more credit for work done. In essence, employee involvement is the key in designing an effective motivation programme. The findings of the present research may provide some guidelines in this regard.

As has been mentioned before, monetary incentives play an important role in motivating both Malaysian and UAE employees irrespective of gender, race, age group, tc. So, managers are expected to include it in their organisations' reward and recognition system. Furthermore, 'good working condition' has been widely favoreud by employees in both the countries. An employees' suggestions system is expected to be in place to know their suggestions in order to improve the organisation's working condition. It is widely known that an effective suggestion system improves the organisation's working condition and saves organisational resources from getting wasted (Bassford & Charles, 1996; Trunko, 1993). Managerial actions on the basis of demographic factors are described below:

Gender: It is noted that Malaysian female employees prefer 'sensible company rules' more than males. Managers are expected to pay more attention to protect the rights of female employees and all measures should be taken to ensure that they are not harassed.

Race: To motivate Chinese employees, in addition to 'high wages', special attention should be paid on 'opportunities to grow'. Some options are: training on various issues, attending conferences and workshops, management/team leadership experience, etc. Job enlargement and enrichment are also relevant in this regard. In the UAE context, since Indians are expatriates and they come from a social background which is significantly different from Arab culture, they require management's help more than anybody else. However, it is surprising to note that Arabs are more concerned on job security than Indians. Managers might be interested to find out why Arab employees feel unsecured in their jobs.

Education: For Malaysians, employees possessing higher qualifications like Ph.D. require good working conditions and job security. Since they are relatively on the upper edge, they may have plentiful opportunities outside, so managers/administrators should provide good working conditions in retaining them. Special emphasis should be placed on their reward and recognition, and job design. Where UAE is concerned, managers should pay more attention to lower qualification holders (certificate, bachelor) as they require management's help more than the others.

Employment status: Though 'management's help to solve personal problems' is the least preferred among the motivators surveyed in Malaysia, as far as this is concerned, managers should keep in mind that non-executives need their help more than executives. On the other hand, UAE managers should assign more challenging and interesting work to the non-executives.

7. CONCLUSIONS

There are similarities and also differences that exist in the ranks of the motivating factors for Malaysia and UAE. The employees in these two countries concur on the two most effective motivators, namely 'high wages' and 'good working conditions'. Further, though management's help is not considered as favourable in Malaysia, it is widely sought in the case of UAE.

Non-declined rate of productivity is a prerequisite for an organisation's survival in the competitive business world; however, productivity improvement requires more than just customer service, technology, decentralisation or process reengineering. Success or failure of these approaches depends largely on the motivation of the employees who are asked to implement them. Reis and (2001) held the view that motivating employees to work in the twenty-first century with theories conceived in the 1880s and early 1900s is likely to be infeasible. The world scenario has been changing rapidly. Any management development programme should be incorporating the factors that affect the working life of the workers. And, furthermore, this kind of programmes may fail if the inputs from the employees are not adequately taken into consideration. In fact, people have witnessed failure of numerous programmes even before they are kicked off. We would like to emphasise that employee involvement is crucial for a successful design of a motivation programme. The present work has provided some guidelines that can be considered at the time of developing employee motivation programmes.

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