

# Applicability of the Motivation Theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom to Contemporary Business Organizations in Oman

*International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Studies*

Vol. 7, No. 2, 202-213, 2020

e-ISSN: 2226-4809/p-ISSN: 2304-6945



**Khadeem A. AlAmrani**

*Sohar Municipality, Diwan of Royal Court, Senior Project Management Specialist, Oman.*  
Email: [abobassem04@yahoo.com](mailto:abobassem04@yahoo.com) Tel: 968-99364715

## ABSTRACT

This paper examines the applicability of the motivation theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom to contemporary business organizations in Oman, taking Sohar Industrial Area as a context. The data for the study was collected through a structured questionnaire involving 50 respondents. Descriptive analysis and nonparametric test of Chi-square have been used to identify the motivating factors and their relevance to the motivational theories. The study found that financial incentives, training, promotion, work flexibility, cooperation of employees, work supervision, office and field environment were the most motivating factors. Results of the study confirmed that theories of Maslow, Herzberg, and Vroom provide a basis for exposing and understanding the motivational factors in the Omani labour force context.

**Keywords:** *Maslow's theory, Herzberg's theory, Vroom's theory, Motivation, Oman.*

**JEL Classification:** *J08, J28, J33.*

**DOI:** 10.20448/802.72.202.213

Citation | Khadeem A. AlAmrani (2020). Applicability of the Motivation Theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom to Contemporary Business Organizations in Oman. *International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Studies*, 7(2): 202-213.

**Copyright:** This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/)

**Funding:** This study received no specific financial support.

**Competing Interests:** The author declares that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

**History:** Received: 10 September 2020/ Revised: 7 October 2020/ Accepted: 21 October 2020/ Published: 2 November 2020

**Publisher:** Online Science Publishing

### **Highlights of this paper**

- This study reviews the motivation theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom.
- This study examines the applicability of such theories in contemporary business organizations in Oman.
- This study investigates the implication of such theories in motivating employees in Sohar industrial Area.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

With the increasing competition in today's business environment, motivating employees remains a key in the success and survival of organizations (Hussin, 2011). The process of motivation plays a very important role in achieving the goals of any organization, profit or non-profit. Motivation meets the needs of the employee and thereby creates the drive and the satisfaction for employees to increase productivity (Abadi, Jalilvand, Sharif, Salimi, & Khanzadeh, 2011; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015; McGregor & Doshi, 2015). It also changes the attitudes of the employees in a positive way that allows the organization to be efficient, reactive, and successful (Wentzel & Wigfield, 2009). Moreover, a well-motivated workforce creates loyal employees with less turnover and facilitates the process of direction as the employees work wholeheartedly with commitment and loyalty to achieve the vision and mission of the organization (Iqbal, Tufail, & Lodhi, 2015; Vlosky & Aguilar, 2009).

Motivation is some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goals to fulfil their needs or expectations (Cherry., 2016). Motivation process focuses on achieving company's goals and simultaneously meeting staff's needs, where the main trigger of staff performance is their needs, through reward against the effects of the company's impetus (Evita & Novianty, 2018).

The road to success in any enterprise is paved by hardworking and satisfied staff. Productivity and profitability inevitably increase when steps are taken by management to respect and motivate employees and meet their expectations. This respect should be apparent from initial recruitment, necessary training, and employment duration (Cook & Artino Jr, 2016). This requires an enlightened administration to understand what really motivates the employees in concern. Basic theories of motivation can be traced backed to Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom. For Maslow, people are motivated by five needs: self-actualization, esteem needs, social needs, safety need, and basic needs (Maslow, 1943). Herzberg distinguished between hygiene factors, or extrinsic motivators, and motivation factors, or intrinsic motivators. The latter include achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and personal growth (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). Vroom theory, on the other hand, attributes an employee's performance to individual factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience, and abilities. The theory uses the variables of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence to account for these factors (Vroom, 1964).

In recent years, the importance of motivation has become obvious to many large organizations who nevertheless struggle to identify the factors which guarantee a happy and productive labour force. The motivating factors vary from individual to individual. Money may be regarded by many as a universal panacea, but experience has shown it is not. Simple expression of appreciation is known to have a positive effect while the nature of the outcome may be especially relevant in some situations (Cherry., 2016). Acknowledgement of the staff have some stake in the success of their enterprise is also known as a motivating factor. In the past, administrative systems were and, in some cases, still are, authoritarian in nature. Good working conditions have great impact on employee's motivation. It is now being realized that including employees in the decision-making process at every level enables management better to understand their perspective, opinions and grievances and hence identify solutions to the motivation problem (McGregor & Doshi, 2015).

It is generally agreed that motivation factors vary from person to person. They are related to working conditions and may vary at different levels. Clearly workers enjoying the same conditions of work and social conditions such as the cost of living will respond to similar motivation factors. Modern economic practices have produced a system whereby prices rise continuously, and workers and their representatives are organized to counter this through annual pay demands. As indicated above, this has led earlier writers such as Schmid (2017) to believe that economic needs are the primary motivating factor in the workplace. The employment career structure was based on gradual progression up a ladder leading to ever greater monetary satisfaction and security.

More enlightened thinking, stimulated by changing economic conditions and the decline of industries employing large numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled labourers, has shown other factors are at work and surprisingly for some, money is not the primary one for everybody. There are many ingredients to be considered in any job, and the value to the individual of each must be considered. Organizational structures such as team-oriented endeavors have been shown to be a factor in motivation (Maryam, 2014). These offer individuals with different needs and ultimate goals to express themselves in an atmosphere of common respect, co-operate and contribute constructively and wholeheartedly to team success. It is inevitable that in any team there are stronger and weaker players. Respect for all members encourages all. It encourages weaker members or minor contributors to appreciate their input which is vital to success. The team structure also removes the burden from individuals who might otherwise be incapable of carrying it alone. It allows individual contributions to be examined and assessed openly therefore avoiding personal recriminations. The feeling of 'belonging' which transcends current activities and procedures within the organization will also be enhanced.

Staff retention has also proved a problem for many industries where a high level of skill is required. Losing skilled workers represents a loss of intellectual capital which is difficult and expensive to replace. Furthermore, clients and customers are often aware of those on whom they can rely and provide them with the level of service they expect. Therefore, staff should never be taken for granted and self-motivation not assumed.

In Oman, the heavy reliance of the economy on oil renders it vulnerable to oil prices shocks. Oman strategic vision 2020 and 2040 aimed to diversify the national economy by encouraging other sectors such as manufacturing, tourism, and logistic sector. Motivating employees in these sectors will achieve the objectives of the diversification. Although there are several studies addressed employees motivations in Oman (Al-Aufi & Ahmed, 2014; Al-Mahrooqi, Denman, & F., 2017; Al Balushi & Aulia, 2019; Albadi, Ibiwani, & Ahmad, 2017; Alrawahi, Sellgren, Altouby, Alwahaibi, & Brommels, 2020; Rawahi, Al, & Ismail, 2018), these studies have focused on service sector such as education or hotels, leaving motivation in industry sector unexplored. In Oman, industrial sector plays a very important role in economic growth and development. It employs large number of workforce and contributes to the gross domestic product (GDP) with 19.3% in 2019 (National Center for Statistics and Information, 2020). Understanding the motivation of employees in this vital sector will contribute to enhance their productivity, fostering economic growth and achieving the goals of the diversification strategy in Oman.

The aim of this paper is to assess to what extent theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom can be applied to contemporary business organizations in Oman, taking Industrial Area in Sohar as a context. Knowing the motivational dynamics in this sector will help policy makers to develop effective strategies to promote human capital for the sector.

The remaining of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides the theoretical framework for the study. Section 3 presents the methodology. Section 4 provides the data analysis and discussion Section 5 concludes.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. Definition

Motivation is some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goals and fulfil some needs or expectation (Cherry., 2016). The cerebral nature of the process is highlighted by Brayer and Marcinowicz (2018) who argue that motivation represents psychological processes that cause the arousal, direction, and persistence of voluntary actions that are goal oriented (Brayer & Marcinowicz, 2018). They further relate this to the degree to which an individual wants and chooses to engage in certain specified behaviour. A related manifestation of motivation in individuals is an expression of willingness to make great efforts to achieve targeted goals. This quality is described as the willingness to exert high levels of effort toward an organizational goal, conditioned by the effort's ability to satisfy some individual need (Breevaart & Bakker, 2017). Willingness to act in this manner may be driven by need of an outcome which is desirable or essential to an individual. Need generates internal tension. If it remains unsatisfied it may stimulate the individual to find a solution which, if obtained, will satisfy the need and lead to the reduction of tension. This corresponds to the situation in the workplace where employees relieve a state of tension by the application of greater effort.

### 2.2. Motivation Theories

As revealed above, there are many facets to what constitutes personal motivation. This has produced a variety of theories from academic studies, reflected in management and organizational behaviour. There is 'no one size, fit all' solution. Theories fall into two categories: content theories and process theories. The former focuses on the individual, while the latter examines the interaction of the various elements present. Successful motivation strategies depend on an enlightened management analysing the work environment from the employee' perspective and acting accordingly. Theories of current interest are those of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom.

#### 2.2.1. Maslow's Theory

Maslow (1943) identified five sets of what he considered as basic needs. These are collated in and shown in Table 1. He argues that all people, including employees in organizations and enterprises, are motivated by the desire to satisfy basic needs and other more intellectual desires. He classifies humans as 'a perpetually wanting group'. This inevitably means that while some needs are satisfied to some degree, others remain unsatisfied, albeit temporarily.

Table-1. Maslow's theory.

Needs dimensions	Details
1- Physiological requirements	Basic subsistence such as food, water, shelter, rest, etc.
2. Safety considerations	Safety and security, protection from danger. And persecution.
3- Social relationships	Social activities, friendship, affection, and love.
4- Personal respect	Self-respect including confidence, strength, independence and freedom, and the esteem of others such as prestige, status. Etc
5- Personal achievement	Maslow sees this as: what humans can be, must be, or becoming whatever one can become.

Source: Maslow (1943).

This theory indicates areas of interest to managers and administrators in the identification of the different individual needs and the relationship between satisfied and unsatisfied needs.

2.2.2. Herzberg's Theory

Motivation clearly affects the success of all human endeavours. It was realized by Fernandez and Moldogaziev (2015) in the mid-1950s, that how jobs are carried out might be modified to increase motivation. The initial work investigated factors which might influence personal motivation which began by a thorough review of existing research on the subject (Herzberg., 1987). This led to a survey of 200 accountants and engineers from which he derived the initial framework for his theory of motivation.

The survey revealed that job satisfaction was mainly related to factors that were intrinsic to the content of the job itself. He listed these variables or 'motivators' as achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. Negative 'hygiene factors', were largely extrinsic, non-job-related factors. These were listed as company policies, salary, co-worker relations, and supervisory styles. Herzberg argued that eliminating the causes of dissatisfaction i.e. The hygiene factors would not in itself produce a state of satisfaction. Satisfaction (and motivation) could only occur using motivators as exhibited in Table 2.

Table-2. Herzberg's two-factor theory.

Hygiene Factor	Motivation Factor
← Job dissatisfaction	Job Satisfaction →
Salary	Sense of Achievement
Job Security	Recognition
Working Conditions	Responsibility
Level and quality of supervision	Nature of the work
Company Policy and administration	Personal growth and advancement

The implication of this model is that motivation can only be increased through basic changes in employee's job which produces job enrichment. The latter is described as increased challenge and responsibility, opportunities for personal advancement, growth, and recognition.

2.2.3. Vroom's Theory

Vroom (1964) suggested that motivation was more related to the expected outcome than the actual result. He formulated an 'expectancy theory' on this basis with respect to work motivation. His expectancy theory argues that people are motivated to behave in ways that produce desired combinations of expected outcomes. His model is based on three key variables described as Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy.

Valence is defined as 'the affective (emotional) orientations people hold regarding outcomes'. This is regarded as a measure of the desirability of any outcome to the individual. It refers to the level of satisfaction the person expects to receive, rather than from the real value derived. Motivation and performance are related. Performance is defined as 'the degree to which the individual believes that performing at a particular level will lead to the attainment of a desired outcome' (Chad, Aguinis, Mackey, & DeOrtentiis, 2018). Effort made in work can produce a variety of outcomes both directly and indirectly. These include, pay, promotion, status etc.

Instrumentality is described as 'a probability belief linking one outcome (performance level) to other outcomes'. It is related to valency in that an outcome is positively valent if the person believes that it holds high instrumentality (high probability) for the acquisition of positively valent consequences and the avoidance of negatively valent outcomes.

Expectancy is defined as the strength of a person's belief about whether a particular outcome is likely. This associates action and likely outcome in the minds of individuals. A variety of factors influence an employee's perceptions about possible outcomes expected, related to job performance.

Omani business organisations would benefit by at least familiarizing themselves with the contentions of these three theories. The central theme of all three is how to motivate the workforce. These researchers have identified the factors which they feel influence this process. There may however be others specific to the Omani labour market as indeed to other countries' cultural and social environment. In common with other countries in the region, expatriates whose motivation is clearly distinct from country nationals, form a large and sometimes major proportion of the labour force and population. Expatriates represent about 79% of the working force in Oman in 2019 ([National Center for Statistics and Information, 2020](#)). Their principal motivation is monetary and at a certain level an improved living and working environment. It is generally fluid being contract based and duration restricted by visa conditions and efforts by the government to replace them with nationals. Omani employees are more likely to be motivated by the factors identified by the theorists who studied relatively stable situations. While finance is always a consideration, longer term considerations will come in to play such as career prospects, work environment, status, stability, and other long-term objectives.

Whilst the above does not represent a conflict of interests, it must be taken into consideration when analysing any data produced by an employee survey which addresses motivation in the Sultanate of Oman and the applicability of the above theories. This was borne in mind while carrying out the following survey of the Omani business environment and its correlation with the three motivation theories of Maslow, Herzberg, and Vroom.

### *2.3. Empirical Determinants of Motivation*

Literature examining the factors influencing motivation can be classified into two strands. First strand of literature focuses on testing the applicability of motivation theories of Maslow, Herzberg, and Vroom. The second strand assesses the main determinants of motivation in different sectors.

[Alrawahi et al. \(2020\)](#) investigated the application of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation to job satisfaction in clinical laboratories in Omani hospitals. The study employed a mixed-method approach of focus group discussions (FGDs). Data was analysed by directed content analysis, and frequencies of statements related to factors were calculated for a comparison with the Herzberg's theory. The study found that job dissatisfaction (hygiene) factors included health and safety, heavy workload, salary, promotion, recognition, and organizational policies, while satisfaction (motivators) included relationships with co-workers, relationship with leaders, and professional development. A similar study by [Abu-Elnasr and Ahmed \(2020\)](#) tested empirically the validity of Herzberg's theory of motivation and its relationship with job satisfaction in the hotel industry in Egypt. Unlike the results of Herzberg's theory, the findings of study revealed that hygiene factors positively affect job satisfaction whereas motivators negatively affect job satisfaction and acting as a source of dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors including money and working conditions are a great source of job satisfaction. Nonetheless, satisfaction is not statistically dependent on motivators. These results confirm that Herzberg's theory may not be applicable to all organizations and to all workers in all countries.

[Badubi \(2017\)](#) attempted to compare the theories of motivation and how they are used to inspire employees to develop the drive to achieve. A qualitative approach and theory-based application were considered for the study. The study reported that there is no single reliable theory to be used, a mixture of can be utilized to motivate employees. The study highlighted the role of leadership style as an important role to play in motivating employees. The study also confirmed that motivation is not always based on financial rewards, but non-financial rewards can also be used to derive the best out of employees.

[Shehab \(2016\)](#) compared motivation to work between Western theories and Islamic thought. The study concluded that (i) the system of administrative incentives in Islam encompasses all the human aspects; whether they

are material, moral or spiritual ones, whereas Western theories only cover the material and moral aspects of the human beings. (ii) Muslim individuals are driven to work by motivational forces more than they are driven by work incentives. (iii) Islam presumes that the performance, productivity and effort of Muslim workers/ employees, who are committed to the tenets of their faith, do not fluctuate according to changes in the material or moral incentives offered, nor do changes in the supervision and control techniques applied.

Al-Aufi and Ahmed (2014) assessed the status and level of motivation of employees working in the Omani academic libraries at Muscat Governorate according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The study included 111 librarians and library employees in 29 identified academic libraries in Oman. The study concluded that the motivation level was modest with varied attitudes for individual motivational needs. The need for security was indicated as the least motivating with an average mean score below agreement. Their lower-order motivational needs are apparently satisfied except for security needs which indicated a level below satisfaction. On the other hand, the upper-level needs of self-esteem were not adequately satisfied.

The second strand of literature has focused on identifying the motivation factors in different sectors. For example, Al Balushi and Aulia (2019) conducted study on the relationship between motivation, loyalty, and commitment in Nama Group companies, using a structured questionnaire with a sample of 63 respondents. The study found that motivation has a positive impact on loyalty and commitment of employees in the company. Rawahi et al. (2018) investigated teachers' motivational perceptions and students' academic achievement at Omani public schools. A questionnaire was used with a sample of 135 teachers in Al Dakhelia Governorate. Results of the study indicated that there was a moderate teachers' motivational perception and moderate level of students' academic achievements. The study also reported a significant difference in teacher motivational perception based on gender and class levels, but no significant difference related to teaching experience. A similar study conducted by Albadi et al. (2017) to identify the factors influencing motivation among academic staffs in private universities in Oman. The study involved 100 teachers and adopted descriptive analysis and one-way ANOVA analysis framework to conclude that reward has the most significant relationship towards academic motivation in the universities in Oman.

Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2017) examined the frequency of use of motivational strategies by English-language literature instructors at the tertiary level in Oman as viewed by their students. Results suggested that participants believe their instructors often employ some of the featured macro strategies that promote self-confidence, create a pleasant classroom environment, and make learning tasks engaging. However, the remaining macro strategies, such as promoting building group cohesiveness and familiarizing learners with L2 values, were rarely employed. Yoko (2014) analyzed the motivational factors that could aid the College management to enhance employee engagement. The study used interview protocol to collect qualitative data from employees about the impact of financial rewards, job security, culture, autonomy, flexibility, communication, discretionary efforts, change within the organization, development and growth, and challenge on employee engagement. The study findings confirmed that the culture of the organization, flexibility and autonomy were the most important factors to keep employees engaged within the college. Orumwense and Mwakipsile (2017) inspected the relationship between employee's motivation and work performance of private Nigerian universities. The study used a cross-sectional design with a questionnaire involving 108 respondents. The study found that in relation to quantity of output, the work performance was only good in relation to submitting all required daily and weekly report but was only fair in as far as attending to the desired number of community people and achievement of target set by supervisor(s). On the quality of output, the employee had achieved a good performance only in relation to recording of low defect/failure rates in work but had only attained fair performance in relations to outputs meeting and specified various university standards and stake holders' satisfaction. On the timeliness of outputs, the employee felt that they were very good at using official time

to perform official institutions duties but had only attained a fair performance in relation to attendance to the required number of community people in time and always meeting deadlines for the tasks assigned. The study also found a high positive significant relationship between employee motivation and work performance.

Chan, Leung, and Liang (2018) addressed the roles of motivation and coping behaviors in managing stress in the context of Hong Kong ECPs. The data was collected using 22 in-depth interviews. The results called for stakeholders to review pre-departure training, so as to ensure that key elements such as personal awareness of stress (cognitive, affective, and physical), expectancies of coping strategies on stress (adaptive or maladaptive), and expectancies of the influence of stress on performance are covered. Muhammad Samsul Izzuddin (2015) explored the direct relationship between employee motivation and human resource practices: recruitment and hiring, training and development, benefit and compensation, and evaluation. A quantitative method was used, and data was collected through questionnaires distributed among 125 operational staff in the hotel industry in Alor Setar, Kedah. Results revealed that human resource practices dimension of (recruitment and hiring), (training and development) and supervisor support have a relationship with employee motivation. Recruitment and hiring, recruitment and development and supervisor support have scored the highest.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a quantitative design to assess the applicability of the motivation theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom to contemporary business organizations in Oman. The data for the study was collected using a structured questionnaire with a sample of 50 workers being surveyed in Sohar industrial area in Oman. Selectin of Sohar industrial area stems from the importance of the industrial sector in Oman’s GDP that amounts to 19.3% according to the Statistical report of the National Center for Statistics and Information (2020). The questionnaire has been subject to a reliability test on a sample of 15 respondents, achieving a reliability index of 0.76 based on Alpha Cronbach. Descriptive analysis and nonparametric statistics of Chi-square have been used to identify the motivational factors for the workers in Sohar industrial area and examine the extent of applicability of motivation theories of Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom in that context.

### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 shows the percentage distribution of the characteristics of the employees involved in the study survey. In terms of gender, the survey shows that 80% are male and 20% are female. This is not surprising given the male domination in the industrial area of Sohar.

**Table-3.** Characteristics of the sample (N=50).

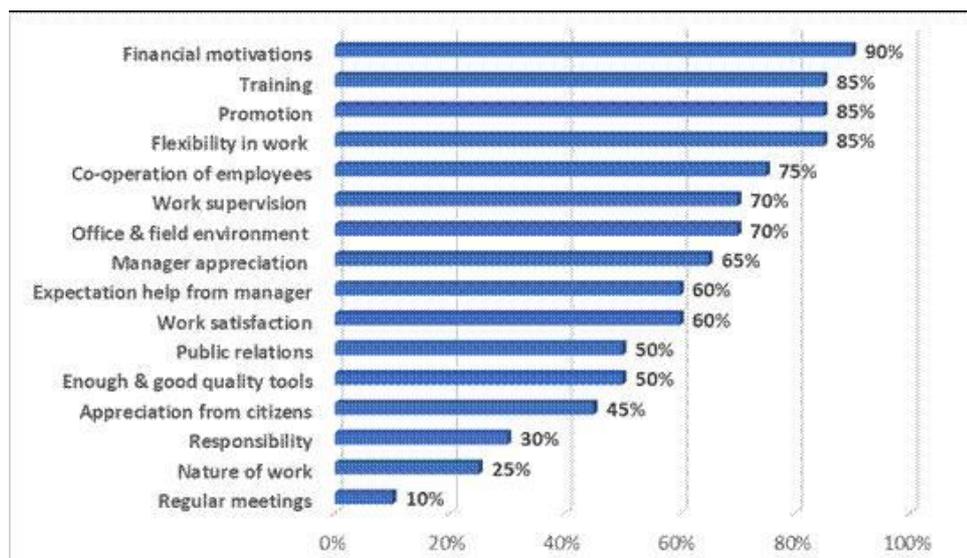
Gender	N	%
Male	40	80
Female	10	20
Nationality		
Omani	25	50
Expatriate	25	50
Age		
20-29	17	34.0
30-39	15	30.0
40-49	10	20.0
50+	8	16.0
Occupation		
Worker	30	60%
Manager	8	16%
Engineer	12	24%

In terms of nationality, the survey shows an equal distribution of nationalities, though one expects more of expatriate workers due to the nature of the core activities of the industrial areas. Age wise, majority of the workers in the age group 20-39 years with a share amounting to 66%. Regarding the occupation, workers represented 60% followed by engineers 24% and managers 16%.

**Table-4.** Motivating factors for workers in Sohar Industrial Area (N=50).

Items	Disagree (D)	Natural (N)	Agree (A)	Chi-value	P-value
1- Office and field environment.	10%	20%	70%	31.00	0.00
2- Nature of the work.	35%	40%	25%	1.48	0.48
3- Enough and good quality tools, etc.	20%	30%	50%	7.00	0.03
4- Flexibility for skill requirement.	8%	7%	85%	62.44	0.00
5- Work satisfaction.	16%	24%	60%	16.48	0.00
6- Appreciation from the manager.	15%	20%	65%	21.28	0.00
7- Appreciation from affected citizens.	15%	40%	45%	8.68	0.01
8- Public relations.	24%	26%	50%	6.28	0.04
9- Co-operation among employees.	9%	16%	75%	41.44	0.00
10- Regular meetings.	60%	30%	10%	19.00	0.00
11- Financial motivations.	4%	6%	90%	72.28	0.00
12- Promotion for grade and position.	9%	6%	85%	62.44	0.00
13- Training.	7%	8%	85%	62.44	0.00
14- Responsibility.	30%	40%	30%	2.00	0.16
15- Expectation help from manager.	16%	24%	60%	16.48	0.00
16- Work supervision (level & quality).	14%	16%	70%	30.28	0.00

Table 4 shows that responses exhibited a high correlation between the motivation factors identified in the theories of Maslow and Herzberg and those experienced by the respondents. As can be observed from Figure 1, the most motivating factors for employees in Sohar Industrial Area are financial incentives (90%), training (85%), promotion (85%), work flexibility, (85%), cooperation among employees (75%), work supervision (70%), and office and field environment (70%). Except for the nature of the work (P-value > 0.05), all factors are statistically significant according to Chi-square test (P-value < 0.05).



**Figure-1.** Motivating factors for employees in Sohar Industrial Area.

Results also showed an emphasis on motivation and hygiene factors alike. Responses to the importance of financial motivation varied from 90% for lower level skilled employees down to 30% for higher level employees such as engineers and managers. This to be expected as higher-level employees enjoy a remuneration more than basic needs while at a lower level employee struggle to make ends meet. The latter do not have the financial cushion which allows the better off to pursue other career objectives. Furthermore, the lower levels are more often filled by expatriates who are focussed on maintaining a family overseas hence the importance of remuneration. As contract workers, they also do not have the opportunity of a motivating career structure within their employment.

Vroom's theory was largely validated by the responses to the question of instrumentality. Frequent recourse to instrumentality, especially for complex problems and requests was expressed by most respondents (75%). This was often an effort to establish good relationships with colleagues and others whom they perceived would be useful in assisting desired outcomes. The nature and culture of Omani society and its hierarchical traditions make instrumentality a dominating feature. Applying rules and regulations to the latter may retard advancement and jeopardise a career.

In terms of the applicability of motivational theories, the conclusion of this study is consistent with [Alrawahi et al. \(2020\)](#) and [Al-Aufi and Ahmed \(2014\)](#) regarding Maslow and Herzberg theories. However, it is not consistent with [Abu-Elnasr and Ahmed \(2020\)](#) who tested the validity of Herzberg's theory of motivation and revealed that hygiene factors positively affect job satisfaction whereas motivators negatively affect job satisfaction, One reason for this inconsistency might be attributed to the difference in the context, this study focused on industrial sector whereas that study focused on hotel industry.

Regarding the empirical determinates, the results of this study are matching those found by [Alrawahi et al. \(2020\)](#); [Abu-Elnasr and Ahmed \(2020\)](#); [Albadi et al. \(2017\)](#); and [Yoko \(2014\)](#) who emphasized the role of financial reward, professional development or training, relationships with co-workers, relationship with leaders, and working environment.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The theories of Maslow, Herzberg, and Vroom have been found to provide a basis for exposing and understanding of motivation factors and their origin in the Omani labour force. Bearing in mind their origin in the Western world of the mid-20th century, universal application to present day in Omani society is unlikely. The specific features of Omani culture and heritage and the multi-national nature of the workforce described above prevent this. The former reflects a historical tribal or hierarchical structure while the latter biases motivation towards financial remuneration.

The results of the survey carried out among a representative sample of fifty employees confirms the above conclusions. Of general interest was the importance of financial motivation to lower level employees. This thought to be due to the large number of expatriates enjoying low wages, though this may be of universal relevance.

The survey reveals the presence of motivating factors over and above those noted in past studies. Further study might reveal the relative importance of these in comparison with the generally accepted motivators listed in earlier studies. The general conclusion of this study is that since agreement with the factors listed in the three earlier studies ranged between 80% and 85%, the latter may be applied with validity in contemporary business organizations in Oman. One limitation of the study is the small sample size undertaken which might not enable to make generalization of the results over the study population. It is worth to mentioning that in industrial workers community, conflict is very common and the role of leaders in managing conflicts and maintaining a conducive work environment for motivating employees could be an area for future research.

## 6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Author is very indebted to the anonymous reviewers of the journal for their constructive comments and valuable feedback on the paper

## REFERENCES

- Abadi, F. E., Jalilvand, M. R., Sharif, M., Salimi, G. A., & Khanzadeh, S. A. (2011). A study of influential factors on employees' motivation for participating in the in-service training courses based on modified expectancy theory. *International Business and Management*, 2(1), 157-169.
- Abu-Elnasr, E. S., & Ahmed, H., M. (2020). Herzberg's theory of motivation and job satisfaction: Does it work for hotel industry in developing countries? *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*, 19(3), 319-343.
- Al-Aufi, A., & Ahmed, A.-K. K. (2014). Assessing work motivation for academic librarians in Oman. *Library Management*, 35(2), 199-212. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/LM-03-2013-0020>.
- Al-Mahrooqi, R., Denman, C. J., & F., A.-H. (2017). A student perspective on the use of motivational strategies by their English language literature instructors in an Omani university. *Language and Culture*, 9(1), 85-103. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17223/24109266/9/11>.
- Al Balushi, K., & Aulia, S. (2019). A study on motivation and its relationship with employee loyalty and commitment: A case study of Nama Group Sultanate of Oman. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*, 7(4), 112-122. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0349.0704015>.
- Albadi, A. A., Ibiwani, A. H., & Ahmad, N. (2017). Factors influencing motivation among academic staffs in private universities in Oman. *Electronic Journal of Business & Management*, 2(1), 29 - 37.
- Alrawahi, S., Sellgren, S. F., Altouby, S., Alwahaibi, N., & Brommels, M. (2020). The application of Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation to job satisfaction in clinical laboratories in Omani hospitals. *Heliyon*, 6(9), e04829. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e04829>.
- Badubi, R. M. (2017). Theories of motivation and their application in organizations: A risk analysis. *International Journal of Innovation and Economic Development*, 3(3), 43-50. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.18775/ijied.1849-7551-7020.2015.33.2004>.
- Brayer, A., & Marcinowicz, L. (2018). Job satisfaction of nurses with master of nursing degrees in Poland: Quantitative and qualitative analysis. *BMC Health Services Research*, 18(1), 239.
- Breevaart, K., & Bakker, A. (2017). Daily job demands and employee work engagement: The role of daily transformational leadership behavior. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 23(3), 338-349. Available at: <http://doi:10.1037/ocp0000082>.
- Chad, H., Aguinis, H., Mackey, J. D., & DeOrtentiis, P. S. (2018). A meta-analysis of the interactive, additive, and relative effects of cognitive ability and motivation on performance. *Journal of Management*, 44(1), 249-279.
- Chan, I. Y. S., Leung, M.-y., & Liang, Q. (2018). The roles of motivation and coping behaviours in managing stress: Qualitative interview study of Hong Kong expatriate construction professionals in mainland China. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 15(3), 561. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15030561>.
- Cherry, K. (2016). What Is the instinct theory of motivation? How instincts motivate behavior, Retrieved from: <https://www.verywell.com/instinct-theory-of-motivation-2795383/>.
- Cook, D. A., & Artino Jr, A. R. (2016). Motivation to learn: An overview of contemporary theories. *Medical Education*, 50(10), 997-1014.

- Evita, S. N., & Novianty, R. R. (2018). Financial incentives: The impact on employee motivation. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 17(6), 1-8.
- Fernandez, S., & Moldogaziev, T. (2015). Employee empowerment and job satisfaction in the US Federal Bureaucracy: A self-determination theory perspective. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 45(4), 375-401. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0275074013507478>.
- Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1959). *The motivation to work*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Herzberg, F. (1987). One more time: How do you motivate employees. *Harvard Business Review*, 65(5), 109-120.
- Hussin, A. B. (2011). The relationship between job satisfaction and job satisfaction and job performance. *Centre for Graduate Studies; Open university Malaysia*.
- Iqbal, A., Tufail, M. S., & Lodhi, R. (2015). Employee loyalty and organizational commitment in Pakistani organizations. *Global Journal of Human Resource Management*, 3(1), 1-11.
- Maryam, T. A. (2014). Employee motivation: The key to effective organizational management in Nigeria. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 16(4), 1-8.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Journal of Psychology Review*, 50(4), 370-396.
- McGregor, L., & Doshi, N. (2015). *How company culture shapes employee motivation*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review.
- Muhammad Samsul Izzuddin, S. (2015). *The effects of human resource practices, supervisor support and empowerment on employee motivation*. Doctoral Dissertation, Universiti Utara Malaysia.
- National Center for Statistics and Information. (2020). *Statistical yearbook*. Oman: National Center for Statistics and Information.
- Orumwense, O., & Mwakipsile, G. (2017). Employees motivation and work performance in various universities in Nigeria. *International Journal of Geology, Agriculture and Environmental Sciences*, 5(4), 1-8
- Rawahi, T., Al, H., N. C., & Ismail, A. (2018). Teachers' motivational perceptions and students' academic achievement at oman public schools. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(12), 295-313.
- Schmid, E. (2017). *Work that matters: Looking back on 2 years of investing in people, walmart today*. Bentonville, AR: Walmart Digital Communications.
- Shehab , I. B. (2016). Motivation to work between western theories and islamic. *European Journal of Business and Innovation Research*, 4(2), 11-35.
- Vlosky, P., & Aguilar, X. (2009). A model of employee satisfaction: Gender differences in cooperative extension. *Journal of Extension*, 47(2), 1-15.
- Vroom, V. (1964). *Work and motivation*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Wentzel, K. R., & Wigfield, A. (2009). *Handbook of motivation at school*. New York: Routledge.
- Yoko, E. V. (2014). *An analysis of motivational theories that could aid the college management to enhance employee engagement*. B.A. Thesis. National College of Ireland.

**Online Science Publishing** is not responsible or answerable for any loss, damage or liability, etc. caused in relation to/arising out of the use of the content. Any queries should be directed to the corresponding author of the article.