

A STUDY OF THE EFFECT OF MANAGERIAL LEVEL ON ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION OF OIL AND NATURAL GAS COMPANY MANAGERS

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Abstract For any organisation, its human capital is the most unique asset as it helps in the actualisation of organisational mission, goals and objectives. Only a highly motivated workforce can help in achieving what all organisations strive for. Organisations have been searching for means and methods to keep employees motivated. Different researches in the area of motivation reveal that some people have a stronger desire to achieve their respective goals as compared to people who are not so concerned about goal achievement. Achievement motivation is the drive to attain success by choosing activities that can help in goal actualization. Achievement motivated people consistently try and find solution to a problem and remain focused on the goal. Tangible reward of success does not deter a person with high level of achievement motivation. Thus, organisations must find measures to keep such employees motivated.

In studies conducted so far, the effect of managerial level on achievement motivation has not been studied. The present study was conducted to identify the effect of managerial level on the achievement motivation of E4 (Superintending Engineer) & E5 (Chief Engineer) level managers in India's leading PSU, Oil and Natural Gas Company (ONGC). The sample for the study was collected from ONGC's five regional offices. Of the total sample of 69 managers, 29 were at E4 (Superintending Engineer) managerial level and 40 were at E5 (Chief Engineer) managerial level. The target sample was only E4 and E5 level managers of ONGC since the turnover at these two levels was relatively higher than other managerial levels. A questionnaire having 52 questions was administered. For the present study, the variables considered were: achievement motivation (Dependent variable) and Management Level: E4&E5 (Independent variable). For the purpose of analysis SPSS 17.0 was used for statistical data analysis. Independent sample t-test, Factor Analysis, Descriptive and Reliability Analysis was applied keeping in mind the nature of hypotheses. According to the findings, E4 and E5 level managers are not significantly demotivated but lack sportsmanship; however, E5 level managers are significantly better in terms of attitude towards work. It may be concluded that E5 level managers do not have significantly higher level of achievement motivation than E4 level of managers. Thus, managerial level may not necessarily increase the achievement motivation significantly. The findings of the study were thought-provoking and implied that managers at level E4 & E5 are significantly less achievement motivated and thus do not strive to take growth opportunities as a challenge and means to learn or gain knowledge. The study was conducted to provide recommendations to policy makers so as to bring about higher level of achievement motivation in ONGC managers particularly at level E4 & E5

Keywords: Achievement Motivation, Chief Engineer, Managers, Oil and Natural Gas Company, PSU Superintending Engineer.

All human beings strive to perform perfectly. This tendency is considered as a basic motive in human behaviour. Organisations constantly have been trying to harness this human tendency to perform perfectly and achieve goals. Research conducted in the past show that some people have a stronger desire to achieve goals while some people lack achievement orientation. This variation in people's approach to achievement has called for a lot of discussion. It has been observed by the behavioural scientists that people with higher achievement motivation exhibit unique characteristics.

Achievement motivation is the desire to excel and indulge in goal oriented activities. People who have higher achievement motivation work hard to solve a problem. Such people are not concerned with the tangible rewards of success but focus primarily on their personal achievement.

19th century witnessed the growth in the importance of motive as a concept with the work of McDougall & Freud. Organisational humanists such as Maslow, McGregor, and Herzberg took up scientific theory of motivation.

Atkinson (1964) gave the original definition of achievement motivation as, 'as the comparison of performances with others and against certain standard activities. As per the study undertaken by Atkinson and Feather (1966), achievement motivation was said to be a combination of two important personality variables: tendency to approach success and tendency to avoid failure. Different and contradictory findings (Eskildsen, Kristensen, and Westlund 2002) with respect to the effect that employee characteristics such as age, gender and educational level have on work motivation, which was the impetus to explore the issue further.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, is India's leading oil and gas exploration company. The present study on achievement motivation has considered managers working in ONGC. Since its inception, ONGC has produced more than 600 million metric tonnes of crude oil and supplied more than 200 billion cubic metres of gas. With a share of 77 per cent in India's crude oil production and 81 per cent in India's natural gas production, ONGC is India's highest profit making corporate. ONGC also has the unique distinction of having paid the highest-ever dividend in the Indian corporate industry. India's leading PSU, ONGC has 5 regional offices across India and two plants. Its competitive strength lies in strong intellectual capital. However, it becomes important to assume that keeping such a massive workforce motivated must be a difficult task for the top management.

A higher level of achievement motivation is the desired behaviour of employees in any organisation. There are many factors that affect achievement motivation of employees/managers in an organisation; experience can be taken as one of them. Experienced managers in terms of number of years spent in the organisation and having attained senior managerial position may have higher level of achievement motivation than less experienced managers. E5 level managers in ONGC may be more motivated to achieve organisational and individual goals than E4 level managers. One may say that motivation is highly co-related with engagement and both engagement and motivation often increases with experience. The reason for considering managerial level E4 and E5 was that the turnover was relatively higher at these two levels as compared to other managerial levels in ONGC.

1. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several factors affecting achievement motivation have been identified through research done in the past. A study done by Jindal-Snape and Snape (2006) reveal that company's characteristics are generally associated with employees' work motivation. The concept of individual-oriented and social-oriented achievement motivations was proposed by Yu and Yang in 1994. According to Yu and Yang, individual-oriented achievement motivation is considered

as the tendency to pursue intrinsic goals in one's own way, while social-oriented achievement motivation refers to the tendency to achieve extrinsic goals in a socially desirable way.

Variations in individual outcomes were identified by researchers Tiffany A. and Cacioppo John T. (2005). The tendency for the positive motivational system was to respond more in case of a positive offset rather than the negative motivational system.

The effect of achievement goals on performance attainment and the moderating role of the performance contingencies was studied by Elliott, Andrew J, Shell Mandy M, Henry Kelly Bonas and Maier, Markus A. (2005). Performance based approach had a higher positive effect on performance than did mastery goals in the presence in the absence of a contingency. Also, the presence of a contingency emphasised the effects of performance based goals on performance and had little impact on the effect of mastery goals on performance. The results of the study revealed the need for a rigorous, systematic examination of the link between achievement goals and performance that also consider features of the achievement task, context and situations.

There was a research conducted by Bloom, Matt and Micheal (2002). Comparatively very little research observed differentials in pay dispersion across organisation and its consequence on employee behaviour. As per the study, the pay dispersion in an organisation was related to the tenure of managers and the possibility of their leaving the organisation.

Yeo, Gillian B and Neal Andrew (2004) identified the relationship between motivation and performance during skill acquisition. With practice, the relationship between effort and performance increased. An interaction between learning and performance orientation emerged only after practice. The negative effects of performance orientation were stronger for individuals with high learning orientation by the end of practice.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The first step in the study was to identify the problem. The symptoms or the effects of the problem were identified and discussed by the researcher and management. It was found that in Oil and Natural Gas Corporation, India's largest Public Sector Unit, a large number of managers at level E4(Superintending Engineer) and E5(Chief Engineer) were leaving the organisation. The employee turnover was very high at level E4 and E5 as compared to other levels. Thus it was important to understand why employees are leaving the organisation. The first few rounds of discussions with the managers & employees revealed that employees, particularly

at these two levels, were not motivated and thus felt alienated from their jobs and organisation.

A systematic analysis of the secondary data and a pilot study was conducted. The secondary data included the HR manual of ONGC and unstructured interview with the employees and managers at level E4 and E5. This approach helped in defining the research problem. Here it is important to state that the research problem necessarily focuses on the causes and not on the symptoms. The research problem was broken down into the following objectives:

1. To identify whether managerial level affect achievement motivation of Managers in ONGC or not.
2. To give guidelines to ONGC to help them bring about higher achievement motivation of their employees particularly those at level E4 & E5.

Theories related to motivation and literature review helped in identifying a list of decisive factors that affect achievement motivation. The factors/ variables considered for this study were:

Dependent variable- Achievement Motivation

Independent variable: Managerial Level.

The independent variable was further classified as:

Managerial Level - E5 (Chief Engineer) & E4 (Superintending Engineer)

In light of the dependent and independent variable, the research hypothesis was constituted. According to the study, achievement motivation is a research phenomenon that is also affected by managerial level. Thus, the following hypothesis was tested for the study:

1. E5 (Chief Engineer) level managers will be having significantly more Achievement Motivation than the E4 (Superintending Engineer) level managers.

The type of research adopted in this study was exploratory research. While conducting a research, the researcher generally faces the problem of not knowing anything about the problem. In this situation, the exploratory research is used to explore the different dimensions of the problem so that a better understanding of the research framework can be developed. The research procedure is unstructured and flexible and thus it gives the researcher all the freedom to understand the problem. Since this study was unstructured, findings of the exploratory research cannot be taken as conclusive.

Exploratory research helped to identify and define the key research variables and also in the formulation of relevant hypotheses.

In most of the cases, the information gathered in research happens to be psychological by nature. In this study, the researcher was interested in knowing the achievement

motivation of E4 and E5 level managers and whether managerial level affects achievement motivation. Most of this information is based on the feelings of the managers. The measurement of physical attributes is not difficult but measurement of psychological properties requires careful attention. All the data collected for research purposes cannot be analysed in the same statistical way because the entities represented by the numbers are different. For this purpose, a researcher has to have proper knowledge of the levels of data measurement, represented by numbers that are to be analysed. Therefore, there is a need to choose the right scale for measurement of data.

In terms of using the data levels/scales, statistical tools and techniques can be divided into two categories: parametric and non-parametric statistics. Parametric tests are statistical techniques to test a hypotheses based on some restrictive assumptions about the population while non-parametric tests are not dependent upon the restrictive normality assumption of the population.

Since in case of parametric tests, assumptions are with respect to the normality of the population and random selection of samples from the normal population, the researcher used parametric statistical tool for the quantitative measurement of the sample data in the form of an interval scale.

For the purpose of this study, Likert's scale was used which is the most common scaling technique. In a Likert Scale, each item response has five rating categories, 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' as two extremes with 'disagree', 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'agree' in the middle of the scale. The researcher in this study made five items as 'always' and 'never' as two extremes with 'frequently', 'sometimes' and 'rarely' in the middle of the scale. On Likert's 5-point scale, 1 indicates 'Always' and 5 indicates 'Never'.

For scale evaluation, validity and reliability are generally applied. Validity is the ability of an instrument to measure what it is designed to measure. A measure is said to be reliable when it elicits the same response from the same person when the measuring instrument is administered to that person successively in similar or almost similar circumstances.

It sounds simple that a measure should measure what it is supposed to measure. It has a great difficulty in executing this in real life. In country like ours where theory development is at infancy stage, validating the constructs becomes very difficult. For this study, achievement motivation scales developed by different researchers in the past were referred to. The reliability of the scale was tested using Cronbach's alpha which came out to be 0.810 (see table I). Coefficient alpha or Cronbach's alpha is actually a mean reliability coefficient for all the different ways of splitting the items included in the measuring instrument. It is a measure of internal consistency reliability for multi-item scales.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.810	52

The data was collected using questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed keeping in mind the objective of the research. The researcher referred to the scales developed in the past to study achievement motivation. This study referred to the section concerning achievement motivation of the Work and Family Orientation Questionnaire (WOFO), modified by Spence and Helmreich (1983). WOFO was first compiled in 1978 by Helmreich and Spence with 32 questions. The 1st to the 23rd questions measured personal achievement motivation; the 24th to the 32nd questions evaluated the attitudes of individuals to family and marriage. The 1st to the 23rd questions were referred to for the purpose of designing questionnaire. The questionnaire for psychological contracts was also referred to which was developed by Raja et al. (2004), who modified the questionnaire designed by Millward and Hopkins. There were 18 questions, and the sub-constructs were transactional and relational types. Achievement motivation scale developed by Deo, Mohan (2002) was also referred to. The factors that were used in Deo, Mohan scale are as follows: Academic, general field of interest and social interest.

On the basis of above mentioned scale references, a questionnaire having 52 questions was developed and administered to the managers at ONGC

Since ONGC has 41,000 employees spread across its 5 regional offices, it would have been very difficult to administer the questionnaire to all of them. On the basis of problem identification, it was decided that the questionnaire should be administered only to the managers at level E4 and E5 as employee turnover was highest in these two levels only as compared to the rest. However, getting the questionnaire filled by all the E4 and E5 level managers was not possible and feasible either. Therefore, random sampling was the procedure chosen by the researcher for this study. Of the various random sampling methods, stratified random sampling was used in this study. In stratified random sampling, elements in the population are divided into homogeneous groups called strata. Then researcher uses the simple random sampling method to select a sample from each of the strata. Each group is called stratum. In stratified random sampling, stratum should be relatively homogeneous and the strata should contrast with each other.

Using stratified random sampling method, a sample of 29 managers of E4 (Superintending Engineers) and 40 managers of E5 (Chief Engineer) was collected from the five regional offices of ONGC in India.

The Hypothesis Tested for the Study Was:

E5 level Managers will be having significantly more achievement motivation than the E4 level managers.

The variables considered for the study were achievement motivation (Dependent variable) and managerial level (independent variable). For the purpose of analysis SPSS 17.0 was used and keeping in view the nature of hypotheses, Independent sample t-test, Factor Analysis, Descriptives and Reliability Analysis was applied.

Since there were fifty two variables in the questionnaire, it was required to reduce the variables so that the further study can be done on the basis of reduced factors. Factor analysis was applied on the variables. The Varimax rotation and the Principal Component Analysis method were used for the factor analysis. The three dominating factors were identified after applying the factor analysis. The first factor is named as "Demotivation" and second factor is named as "Sportsmanship" which represents determination, drive to excel, zeal towards life and an effort to reduce work related stress. The third factor is named "Attitude for work" which signifies aspiring for excellent results, finding work meaningful and challenging.

The factors stated above can be understood as follows:

Demotivation: Managers of this category reflect the mental make-up of PSU employees who are alienated from their jobs either because of their comparatively less pay in the market or the organizational climate. They avoid work because they do not find their work interesting. Instead they prefer to gossip to vent out their emotions. They do not have any goal in their life. They are callous and easy-going in life and shirk responsibilities.

Sportsmanship: Managers oriented towards achievement, enjoy life and are in control of their lives. Managers of this category set moderately difficult but achievable targets. They indulge in sports, listen to music, read and collect books to distress themselves. They have an open and positive outlook towards life.

Attitude for Work: Motivated people are dynamic and have high self-esteem. Such people are concerned with their personal achievement rather than the tangible rewards of success. Managers in this category are hardworking, sincere and strive to attain their targets. They have high regard for their seniors and take advice from them to improve upon whatever task they do. They aspire to get excellent result and specialise in their field. When the job is significant, an employee feels affiliated to it and thus such a manager would never hesitate to innovate and make the job more challenging. People high in achievement motivation give topmost priority to their work and have job affiliation. Achievement oriented managers strive to identify solutions to a problem and never leave the outcome to chance.

The hypothesis tested for the study was: *E5 level managers will be having significantly more Achievement Motivation than the E4 level managers.*

The mean score of E4 and E5 level are shown in table II. The mean score of E4 and E5 level managers are negative in terms of Demotivation (-.1190, -.1649) which implies that managers at level E4 & E5 are significantly not demotivated. In terms of Sportsmanship (-.1043, -.1628), the score is lower and negative, thus they lack zeal to take up challenging tasks and do not de-stress themselves. E4 level managers have lower and negative score (-0.2423) in terms of Attitude for Work as compared to E5 level managers having higher score (0.1177). E4 level managers do not take life to be challenging and do not find their work meaningful.

The results of hypothesis testing using independent samples t-test is shown in table III. The Levene’s test accepts the null hypothesis of equal variances between the samples. In case of Independent samples t-test, it is found that the probability value is more than five percent in all cases. Hence the null hypothesis in terms of above mentioned factors between E4 and E5 level managers has to be rejected and it can be concluded that both E4 and E5 level managers are equally motivated but lack sportsmanship, however, E5 level managers are significantly better in terms of attitude towards work.

3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Achievement motivation of managers is a very crucial issue in today’s competitive business environment. Organisations have to understand that ultimately it’s the managers who create dynamism in the organization, inspire the subordinates and workers for putting in hard work and strive to get the organizational goals accomplished.

Achievement Motivation is a complex phenomenon and its dynamics are ever changing with change in perception of both the employees and employers. Over the years, the basic understanding of how employees can be motivated has changed. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, management believed that employees were motivated entirely by money. However, this is not true in the present scenario. During the last 80-100 years, employee needs and values have changed dramatically. Individuals expect employment relationship to be much more than the pay. The problem of establishing the right organizational climate to maximize employee motivation and commitment lies still with both the employer and the employee. Problem arises when managers attempt to implement HR systems with a mind-set of “managing people” instead of “assisting them”. An effective way of implementing the HR policies so as to increase the achievement motivation of managers would be to help them

Table 2: Group Descriptive Statistics

	Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Demotivation	E4	29	-.1190	.8178
	E5	40	-.1649	.7521
Sportsmanship	E4	29	-.1043	.9148
	E5	40	-.1628	1.1359
Attitude_for_work	E4	29	-.2423	1.0272
	E5	40	.1177	1.4838

Table 3: Independent Sample T-Test

		Levene’s test for equality of variance		Test of Difference	
		F-Statistic	p-value	t-statistic	p-value
Factor 1: Demotivation	Equal Variances assumed	.487	.488	.241	.810
	Equal Variances not assumed				
Factor 2: Sportsmanship	Equal Variances assumed	.685	.411	.228	.820
	Equal Variances not assumed				
Factor 3: Attitude for Work	Equal Variances assumed	7.192	.009	- 1.124	.265
	Equal Variances not assumed				

develop managerial skills under the coaching of a nurturing task leader. If the organization cares for employees and takes a personal interest in their well-being, this would certainly help employees to know how to meet their achievement demand and help them to achieve both individual and career goals.

The outcomes of this study can help policy makers at ONGC to address the motivational issues related to managers; which is also one of the core objectives of this study. If achievement motivation is an individual drive to achieve individualistic goals then one must not ignore that organisational culture and climate also should be conducive enough to keep the spirits high of such 'achievement oriented' people. The role of organisation in improving the level of achievement motivation of managers is vital. Organisation should be very meticulous in designing and implementing employee-friendly HR policies.

The study conducted on managers in India's leading PSU, ONGC, reveals that both E4 (Superintending Engineer) and E5 (Chief Engineer) level managers were found to be significantly motivated; both E4 and E5 level managers do not prefer to leave job half-done, they like to take up challenging projects and avoid gossiping or missing office for some days. However, both E4 and E5 level managers lack sports initiative and avoid listening to music and reading books. As per the findings of the study, E5 level managers, as compared to E4 level managers, find work meaningful and set standards and strive to achieve them. They relatively work hard and sometimes take advice from their seniors.

It becomes important to evaluate and assess what measure can be taken to increase the level of achievement motivation, particularly in terms of sportsmanship, of Superintending and Chief Engineers in ONGC.

Some of the recommendations that may be implemented at ONGC are:

- **Revision of performance management system:** Performance management is a process that unites goal setting, performance appraisal and development into a single, common system whose aim is to ensure the employee's performance is supporting the company's strategic aims. To make work more challenging and so as to bring about a sense of achievement, individual targets/ goals should be communicated to all managers, including managers at level E4 and E5. Knowledge of goals and objectives of the functional unit and business unit would certainly make employees focused and clear about what they are supposed to do. Performance appraisal method and its administration would also keep the employees motivated. ONGC must not take pay and promotion decisions based on seniority or number of years spent in the organization. Managerial growth should be linked to performance. A realistic appraisal method would allow the boss and subordinate develop a plan for correcting any deficiencies and to reinforce the things the subordinate does right. Knowledge of individual performance would also aid in career planning of managers. It would provide an opportunity to review the employee's career plans in light of his or her exhibited strengths and weaknesses. A sound appraisal policy and its execution would certainly bring about higher level of achievement motivation.
- **Introducing Flexible Working Arrangements (FWAs):** FWAs are alternatives to the traditional "9-to-5" workday, the standard workweek, or the traditional workplace. FWAs are work practices (explained by the employer in employment policies and contracts) that allows the employees a certain degree of freedom in deciding how the work will be done and how they'll coordinate their schedules with those of other employees. ONGC may revise its work related policy by bringing about flexibility in terms of scheduling of hours worked, such as alternative work schedules which consist of flexi time and compressed workweeks and arrangements regarding shift and break schedules. Secondly through flexibility in the amount of hours worked, such as part-time work and job sharing; and thirdly by offering flexibility in the place of work, such as working at home or teleworking. This policy would certainly increase employee motivation.
- **Training and Development Programmes:** Constant training at specific intervals, depending on the need of the managers can be advantageous. ONGC may encourage self-development programmes for all its managers and have periodic career planning and counseling. These kinds of programmes would certainly aid in employee engagement.
- **Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs):** EAPs would help managers to seek professional help on several issues. This kind of a benefit would certainly reduce absenteeism and turnover. Encouraging employees to take up vocational courses or taking them out for adventure sports would also help in elimination of stress. Programmes such as meditation, yoga and individual based counseling would certainly increase the 'Sportsmanship' factor substantially.
- **Skill and Knowledge Up gradation:** ONGC must tie-up with universities to provide pragmatic education to their managers at all levels. The courses may be short-term but would certainly prove beneficial to their managers. The managers should be encouraged to increase their qualification and sabbatical leaves should be given. A contract may be signed so that people don't leave after pursuing their education.

- Conducting Management Development Programmes: Management Development Programmes should not be restricted to only E5 level managers but for everyone starting from E1 level. The content of the MDP should be customised as per the functional unit and organisational need.

The policy makers of ONGC, on the basis of findings and recommendations given in the study, can address the motivational issues related to its managers. Implementing various employee benefit programmes would bring about a sense of engagement, loyalty and commitment which would certainly bring about higher achievement motivation which would subsequently yield better results and ultimately growth of India's leading PSU.

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