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Public Service Employee Motivation Issues in Georgia

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Abstract

The motivated employee represents the essential condition of any organization's success. Public and private sector managers should constantly work toward coordinating and increasing employee motivation in order to ensure the timely and effective implementation of the plans set by the organization. Accordingly, proper assessment of processes and prompt determination of individuals' driving motives are needed. Studies have shown that public service employees from all around the world face challenges, such as: incompatibility of knowledge, experience and position, as well as hard and lightweight work. Consequently, public managers should be aware of modern human resource management methods that can be used in effective and efficient ways to increase employee work quality. The main purpose of the paper is to determine the current situation of the public sector in Georgia. In addition, the research seeks to identify and examine the factors that influence employee demotivation and to determine under what conditions motivation can be a worthwhile investment in a public organizations. Methodologically, the work is based on analysis of the available literature and the results of the research statistically processed based on the survey example of 449 respondents from different Georgian ministries selected by a random simple.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Motivation, Public Sector Employee, Performance Appraisal, Maslow Hierarchy of Needs.

Introduction

Human Resource Management is an important process which plays a significant role in the success of any organization. It was established in the mid-twentieth century in the US (Paichadze, Chokheli, Paresashvili, 2011, p.22). Globalization, technology development, demographic changes and economic challenges had an exceptional impact on it. The main objective of the management is to make current job analyses, that includes candidates attraction, selection, training, communication, remuneration and motivation (Dessler, 2009, p. 2).

In the 21st century the motivated employee is the essential condition for any organizations' success. Their individual motivation is influenced with various biological, intellectual, social and emotional factors. Based on this, Georgian public sector managers need to take a series of expedient measures in order to create and provide effective system which has impact on employees' individual performance and their work quality.

The main purpose of the paper is to determine the current working environment of the public sector in Georgia. The research has exposed the main demotivation elements that needs to be eliminated in order to ensure effective and efficient functioning of human resource management system in the country.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Public employee motivation is important to improve public sector efficiency. In developing and developed countries motivation for public sector workers, their trust toward managers, professional liability, satisfaction and ethical development is gradually reduced (Global Center for Public Service Excellence, 2014, p. 1). **Elmer Staats** believes that the public service

is the integrity of attitude, a sense of responsibility and a sense of morality (Perry, Wise, 1990, p. 368). In **Vandenabeele's** opinion public service motivation is 'the belief, values and attitudes that go beyond self-interest and organizational interest, that concern the interest of a larger political entity and that motivate individuals to act accordingly whenever appropriate' (Belle, Cantarelli, 2010, p. 6). It is important to note that the resources to support motivation process in the public sector always will be a limited factor.

Some of the scholars believe that the main reason to decrease the public sector employee motivation is lack of autonomy and diversity, low salary, organization policy and ineffective communication. Recent research has shown that 83 percent of the public servants of OECD Member States are dissatisfied and 84 percent express their distrust toward managers (Global Center for Public Service Excellence, 2014, p. 2). Furthermore, in several countries' public institutions the researches were conducted, for e.g.:

In 2013, around 1000 public employees were interviewed in the UK. 70% of respondents felt low motivation. At the same time, 80% of respondents thought to leave the current service within the next three years. The reason for this was the reduced salary and the absence of appropriate equipment required to perform the work effectively (Global Center for Public Service Excellence, 2014, p. 5);

According to the research conducted in 2010 in Netherlands, only 1 in 10 citizens thought that public employees worked hard and effectively. Additionally, 45% of respondents believed that the same work in public service organizations could be done with fewer employees (Loon, 2015, p. 34);

Jung and Rainay have observed that in the United States clear organizational mission and perceived goal relevance increased civil servants motivation (Belle, Cantarelli, 2010, p. 16).

According to **Perry and Wais**, the high rate employee public service motivation positively reflects on work performance and are less dependent on utilitarian incentives. Additionally, increases the public organization membership desire (Belle, Cantarelli, 2010, p.5). As stated by, **Brewer's** and **Selden's** definition, strong motives are necessary to perform public, community and social services (Belle, Cantarelli, 2010, p. 6). As reported by one study, there are four main factors that draw individual's motivation in public agencies: the attractiveness of public policy making, commitment to public interests and civic duties, self-sacrifice and compassion (Global Center for Public Service Excellence, 2014, p. 6).

According to **Bright**, public service motivation is strongly linked to gender, education, management and individual monetary desire. **Dahart and Davis** have examined that women had a high level attraction to policy making and compassion. Additionally, **Perry's** study showed, that men had higher public interest and commitment than women (Belle, Cantarelli, 2010, pp. 15-16). **Perry** argues, that public service motivation depends on individuals' socialization through sociohistorical institutions. As stated by **Moianah and Pandey** (Moynihan, Pandey, 2007, pp. 42-43):

The level of education positively reflects the public service motivation;

Membership of the professional society has a positive effect on individuals motivation;

Organizational culture affects an employee's motivation;

Employees who experience a hierarchical culture have lower level motivation in the civil services;

Organizations that have red tapes (regulations, procedures and etc.) have lower level employee motivation;

Employees who work in a friendly environment and have the right to make decisions are more likely to have a higher level motivation;

Motivation is also effected through length of organizational membership.

Perry and Wise argue that individuals with high public interest are more likely to choose public institutions. In addition, individuals with high public service motivation are more willing to protect public interests and exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment, which in turn contributes to higher work performance and job satisfaction. Consequently, attempts to leave the current job is minimized (Moynihan, Pandey, 2007, p. 41).

Weibel examined that the salary played an important role in the successful and efficient execution of the unpleasant cases, which strengthened extrinsic motivation and, on the contrary, weakened the intrinsic (Belle, Cantarelli, 2010, p. 19-20). According to **McKee**, motivation can be internal and external (McKee, 2011, p. 62):

Internal motivation is the feeling of inner satisfaction and sense of development;

External motivation is the result of external forces involvement, such as tangible incentives, social status and more.

Fredrickson and Hart suggest that the main motivation of public officials should be patriotism (Perry, Wise, 1990, p. 369). **Turner and Lawrence** think that the importance of autonomy and clear objectives promotes motivation. They assume that employees will be more motivated when they realize the importance of their work and have a sense of responsibility towards the outcomes of their assigned tasks (Perry, Wise, 1990, p. 371).

Methodology

The aim of the survey was to establish the objectives, to determine the target population, to select the respondents and to prepare the questionnaire. Accordingly, all the Georgian Ministries, Prosecutor's office, Parliament and Tbilisi City Hall's 449 specialists randomly took part in the research. Research was carried out completely anonymous in August-October, 2017. The questionnaire was designed visually well, was easily readable and included 33 questions that combined Likert type scale, open and closed questions.

Quantitative method of research was used to uncover trends in thoughts and opinions. This method is highly popular and widely distributed in a number of scientific disciplines. The software package IBM SPSS Statistics v.22 was used to process and analyse the materials. This program is an effective statistical tool to provide data base and its further statistical processing and analyses.

Results and Findings

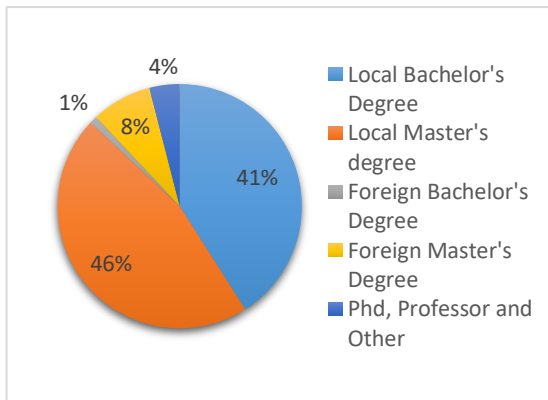


Figure № 1: Respondents' education

During the survey 449 public employees were examined. In the study 67% women and 33% men have participated. Additionally, 60% participants are 31-40, 27% 41-50, 10% over 51 and 3% are 20-30 years old.

46% have a Master's degree and 41% Bachelor's Degree from different Georgian Universities. It should be also noted that there are a few civil servants who have obtained higher education abroad. Besides, only 4% are having Doctor's or Professor's title.

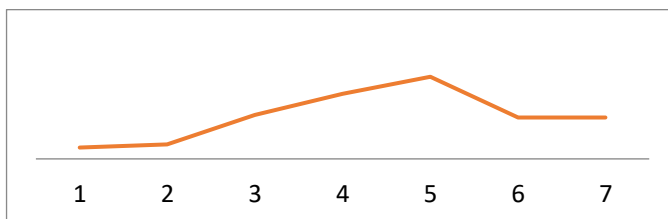


Figure № 2: Respondents' level of motivation

As a result of the survey, average motivation level of employees in Georgian public agencies is 4.6 point. Approximately 23.4% of interviewed civilians have rated low level motivation. 21.6% of them rated the issue on average, while the remaining 55% of respondents rated high level motivation in the institutions.

45% of public employees found that the organizations have a modern-liberal environment, 34% find difficult to answer the question and only 21% consider that they have a traditional bureaucratic governance in the agencies.

One of the most important part of the research was to examine the needs of respondents based on the Maslow pyramid of needs. According to data analysis, the primary requirement for 58.8% of employees is self-actualization and afterwards the basic physiological needs (12.7%), safety and security needs (11.6%), esteem needs (8.7%) and belongingness and love needs (8.2%) are presented.

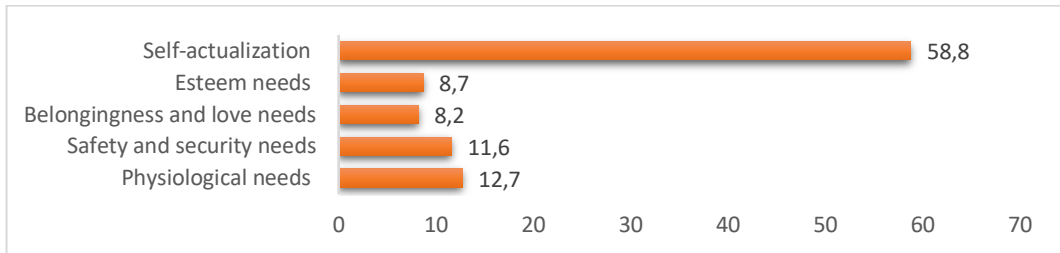


Figure № 3: Needs sorted by priorities

The question whether the respondent's effort and remuneration is fair compared to other people working in the same situation 33% of examinees feel that it is fair, 40% disagree and 27% of respondents can not respond to the issue. In addition, according to data analysis, about 60% of employees are not satisfied with the salary, 27% have difficulty in giving the answer and only a small portion of respondents (13%) are satisfied with their wages.

As a result of the survey, 74% of respondents are dissatisfied with the possibility of a career advancement in the organization and only 26% of respondents are satisfied with this issue.

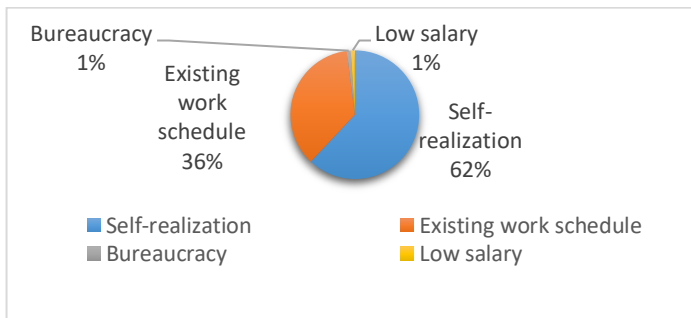


Figure № 4: The main reasons to leave the current job

About leaving the current job, it is clear that only 21% of respondents have never thought of leaving their positions, 42% rarely, 27% often and only 10% is everyday thinking to leave the office. The main reason to leave the organization is the desire for self-realization, bureaucracy, low salary and existing work schedule. Additionally, 69% of interviewed men and 58.5% of women report bureaucracy as a main reason of changing the current institution. At the same time, all the respondents of age 20-30, 42.3% of 41-50, and 57.1% of over 51-year employees have named work schedule as the main reason for changing the job.

According to the survey results, 15.8% of respondents never, 50.8% rarely, 33% often and 0.4% every day participate in various training programs and conferences which are offered by the organizations. In addition, it was established that 47.4% of public servants by their will rarely find information on the available training programs and conferences. It should be also noted that 28.7% of respondents frequently and 2% every day investigate the information on this issue. Analyses also showed that 21.8% of employees independently never find information of the training programs and conferences.

As a results, 40.3% of respondents totally and 26.1% partially agree with the effective communication between managers and employees. 1.6% respondents totally and 11.6% partially disagree on this issue. At the same time, 20.5% of examinees expressed neutral position.

On the question whether the managers fairly evaluated individual work performance 27.8% of respondents completely and 19.2% partially agreed, 27.6% took a neutral position, while 20.7% of respondents partially and 4.7% totally did not agree on this issue.

Based on the survey, in the organizations 43.9% of employees rarely and 41% never take part in the formulation and decision-making processes. In addition, 14% frequently and 1.1% every day are involved in the developing organizations' policies. As it turns out, 57.7% of employees rare, 27.4% often, 13.1% never and only 1.8% of respondents every day offer to managers new ideas.

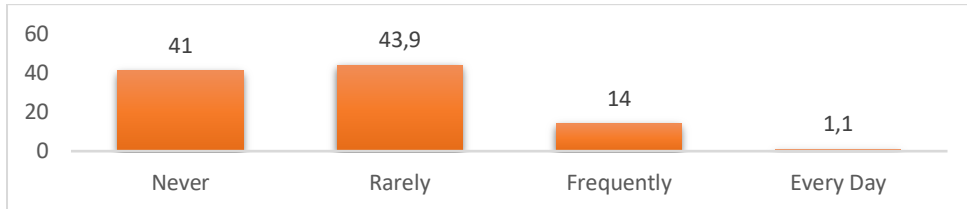


Figure No 5: Participation in the formulation and decision-making processes

Whether the management style of leadership required an improvement 41.9% of respondents totally and 26.3% partially agreed on it. In addition, 13.6% examinees took neutral position and only 11.4% of the civil servants partially and 6.9% totally did not agree with the need of management style improvement subject.

The research aimed to find out if the same job in the public services were possible to perform with less employees. According to the results 29.6% civil servants totally and 10.7% partially disagreed with the idea, 15.1% of respondents took a neutral position and 20% of the employees partly and 24.5% totally agreed upon the stuff reduction necessity.

49.2% of respondents totally and 17.6% partially agreed on the importance of the patriotism in the public institutions. Additionally, 16.9% showed neutral position, 10.5% of respondents partially and 5.8% totally did not give importance of patriotism at all.

Furthermore, 44.1% of respondents are satisfied with the current work schedule, 20.7% are not and 35.2% more or less. Additionally, 49.2% of surveyed respondents rarely, 36.7% often, 10.7% never and 3.3% every day work overtime. According to the survey, 63% of respondents never, 26.9% rarely, 8.5% often and 2.5% every day receive tangible and/or intangible encouragement for overtime work. In addition, 90% of respondents think that tangible and/or intangible encouragement will increase the employees' work efficiency.

Moreover, professionalism (28.7%), sense of responsibility (27.5%), communication (16.4%) and team work (13.9%), diligence (7.4%), influential acquaintances (3.1%), patriotism (1.9%), logical thinking (0.9%) and the ability to work in stressful situations (0.3%) were named as a basic skills needed to work in the public sector.

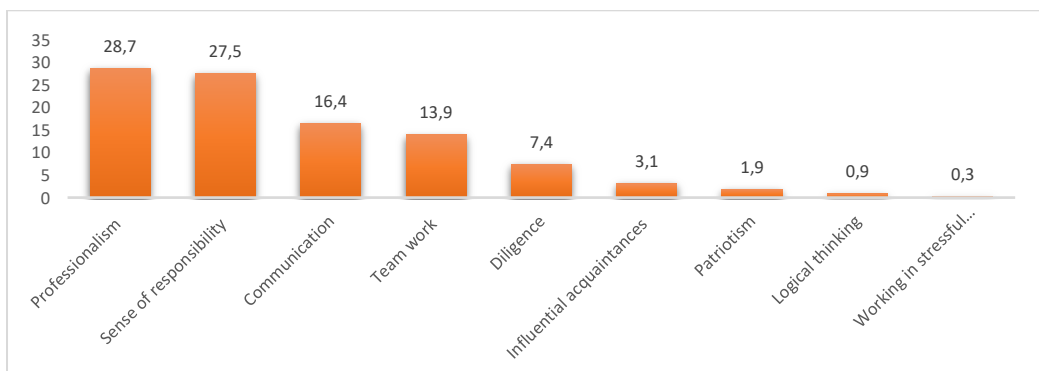


Figure № 6: Basic skills needed in the public agencies

According to the research, examinees named the organization's policy (44.1%), low salary (21.4%), ineffective communication (2.2%) as a main demotivators in the public sector. In addition, 1.1% respondents think that bureaucracy, nepotism, feeling of instability, transparency, monotony, injustice and work underestimation are the key demotivation elements in the offices. Furthermore, 29% of respondents think that the main demotivators presented in the questionnaire, such as lack of autonomy and diversity, low salary, organization policy and inefficient communication are not the main ones.

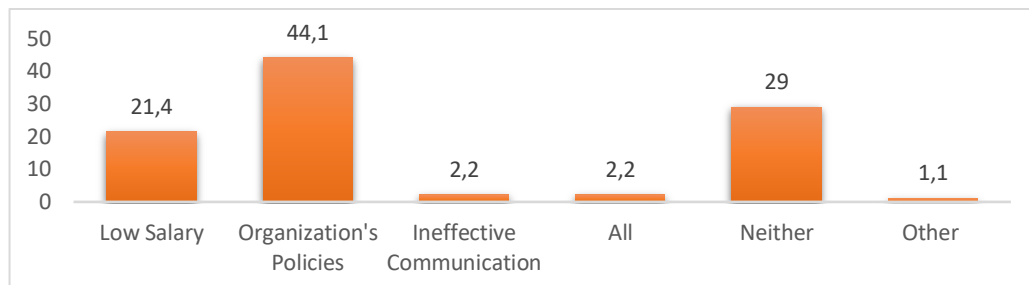


Figure № 7: Main Demotivators in the organizations

Based on the research, it was found that in the organizations managers increase employee motivation through positive assessment (22.2%), material incentives (15.6%), career advancement (9.7%), offering interesting tasks (7.6%), good communication with the managers (7.5%), work stability (7.1%), intangible encouragement (6.9%), engaging to formulate organization's strategy (4.7%) and participating in training programs (1%). Furthermore, 11.5% of respondents believe that the managers are not using the different encouragement systems.

Conclusion

One of the most important issues for the state sector is to take care of the available human resources. Despite Georgia's significant steps forward and international progress, relation with public servants remains one of the main challenge.

As a results of the survey, the staff motivation in Georgian public agencies is higher than average. According to Maslow's pyramid of need, the primary requirement for servants are self-actualization and only afterwards is presented physiological needs (food, water and etc), safety needs (security), esteem needs (feeling of accomplishment) and belongingness and love needs (friends). Most of the respondents are dissatisfied with the career advancement opportunity in the organizations and the existing wages. In addition, managers rarely organize and offer the training programs and conferences for employees. Furthermore, respondents by their will seldom find information about the current training programs. Most of the respondents are not involved in formulating strategies and decision-making processes in the organizations and there are a few employees who regularly offer new ideas to leaders. According to the results of the research, organizations have a favorable working culture (breaks, vacations, communications/relationships between managers and employees). Among the surveyed employees there are a few specialists who think that managers do not fairly evaluate their work. A large number of respondents believe that the organization's management style needs improvement and staff reduction. In addition, some part of the specialists think that the feeling of patriotism in public institutions is an important factor. The study also showed that the co-workers were more or less satisfied with the work schedule, despite the fact that they had overtime work, whose tangible and /or intangible incentives were rare. Besides, respondents assume that tangible and /or intangible encouragement will be an important contributor to perform work more efficiently. According to data analysis, the main reasons for leaving the jobs were the desire for self-actualization, the bureaucracy, low salary and work schedule. Respondents have also revealed the main skills which were needed to work in the public sector. Skills like professionalism, sense of responsibility, communication, diligence, influential acquaintances, patriotism, logical thinking, teamworking and ability to work in the stressful situations. Additionally, respondents also named organization policy, low wages, inefficient communication, bureaucracy, nepotism, sense of instability, transparency, monotony, injustice and labor underestimation as a main demotivation elements. Beyond, the research has also found that managers raise the motivation through positive assessment, material incentives, career advancement opportunity, constant communication, stable service, involving in planning strategies and participating in different training programs.

Consequently, leaders employed in Georgian public agencies should provide some kind motivation for the employees to fulfill the high quality work. Due to the actuality of the issue, human resource management specialists should be aware of

the efficient use of modern human resources management capabilities, which will ultimately facilitate the improvement of the existing environment. In order to implement this, proper assessment of the processes and prompt determination of individuals' driving motives are needed. The motivation process is a complicated mechanism were motivation theories are still processed. Since there is no one of the best strategy, it is important to analyze, that human beings are different and require individual approaches.

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