

The Impact of Employee Motivation on Employee Performance

Assignment 1

Chapter One: General Framework and Chapter Two: Literature Review

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Chapter One: General Framework of the Study

Research Introduction

Organizations depend on people to convert strategies, capital, technology, and information into meaningful results. Although modern firms increasingly invest in digital systems and formal performance controls, these resources create value only when employees are willing to direct sustained effort toward organizational objectives. Employee motivation therefore represents a central management concern because it affects why people initiate work, how intensely they work, how long they persist, and whether they use their capabilities creatively. Work motivation has been defined as the internal and external energetic forces that initiate work-related behaviour and determine its direction, intensity, and duration [2].

The management literature distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic forms of motivation. Intrinsic motivation exists when employees perform an activity because the work itself is interesting, meaningful, or satisfying. Extrinsic motivation arises when employees act to obtain separable outcomes such as pay, promotion, recognition, security, or avoidance of negative consequences. Self-determination theory further explains that externally initiated behaviour varies in the degree to which it is internalized. Employees may comply only to obtain a reward, or they may identify with a goal because they personally value its contribution [3]. This distinction is important because the quality of motivation may influence performance differently from the total amount of effort.

Employee performance refers to the behaviors and results through which an individual contributes to work objectives. In the present study, it is assessed through employees' reports of task timeliness, perceived quality, and effective completion. The operational measure is the five-item performance section of a public employee survey conducted in Saudi Arabia and Yemen [8]. This individual-level definition matches the unit of analysis and avoids making unsupported claims about audited organization-level outcomes.

Several theoretical mechanisms explain why motivation may affect performance. Motivated employees allocate attention to work priorities, exert greater effort, persist when difficulties arise, and develop better task strategies. Goal-setting theory proposes that specific and challenging goals can improve performance by directing attention, mobilizing effort, increasing persistence, and stimulating strategy development, provided that employees possess adequate ability, feedback, resources, and commitment [5]. Motivation can also support discretionary behaviours such as cooperation, learning, creativity, and proactive problem solving, which may improve collective performance beyond the completion of formally assigned duties.

The contemporary evidence base generally supports a positive relationship. A forty-year meta-analysis covering 183 studies and 212,468 participants found that intrinsic motivation was a medium-to-strong predictor of performance and was especially relevant to performance quality, whereas incentives were relatively stronger predictors of performance quantity [4]. More recently, a meta-analytic review of cross-lagged longitudinal studies found that earlier work motivation predicted later job performance after controlling for prior performance, while the reverse pathway was not statistically significant [1]. These findings suggest that motivation is not merely a temporary reaction to good performance; it can operate as an antecedent of subsequent performance.

Nevertheless, management practice often treats motivation as a simple matter of increasing financial rewards. Such an approach overlooks differences between autonomous and controlled motivation, meaningful work, and employees' general feelings about their jobs. The present study examines employee motivation as a broad work-related state represented by enjoyment, satisfaction,

enthusiasm, and the reverse of job unpleasantness or disengagement. It investigates whether higher motivation is associated with stronger self-reported employee performance.

Research Problem

Many organizations experience a gap between the performance they expect and the performance employees actually deliver. Management may introduce targets, monitoring systems, and compensation programmes, yet outcomes can remain inconsistent when employees do not perceive their work as meaningful, supported, fairly rewarded, or connected to organizational goals. Low or poorly structured motivation can appear through reduced effort, absenteeism, weak service quality, limited initiative, resistance to change, and higher intentions to leave. These consequences can affect productivity, customer relationships, operating costs, and the organization's ability to sustain competitive performance.

Theoretical Gap

The literature demonstrates that motivation is multidimensional, yet applied datasets often combine related motivational feelings into a single score. The meta-analysis by Van den Broeck et al. found that intrinsic motivation is particularly important for well-being, attitudes, and behaviour, while identified regulation is especially relevant to performance and organizational citizenship behaviour [3]. Similarly, Cerasoli et al. showed that intrinsic motivation explains more variation in performance quality, whereas incentives are more closely connected to performance quantity [4]. The present study acknowledges this multidimensional theory but limits its statistical claim to the overall six-item motivation score available in the public dataset.

A second theoretical gap concerns causal direction. Cross-sectional studies cannot determine whether motivated employees become better performers or whether successful performance makes employees feel more motivated. The longitudinal meta-analytic evidence reported by Wang et al. supports a directional pathway from motivation to later performance [1], but further organizational studies are needed to examine how this relationship appears in different work contexts and through practical indicators understood by employees.

Practical Gap

Managers frequently need evidence about which motivational practices deserve priority. Financial rewards are visible and easy to administer, but they may not address employees' needs for autonomy, competence, relatedness, recognition, development, and purposeful work. Evidence based on 32,614 individuals across 25 countries indicates that autonomy and social relatedness are positively associated with work motivation and that wider social conditions can shape these relationships [2]. Organizations that rely only on pay may therefore miss important non-financial mechanisms.

In addition, managers need contextual evidence about whether motivated employees report stronger task performance, particularly in demanding or disrupted work conditions. The availability of a public survey of 307 employees from Saudi Arabia and Yemen makes it possible to examine this relationship transparently with reproducible analysis [8]. Accordingly, the main problem is expressed through the following question:

Main Research Question

To what extent does employee motivation influence employee performance among the surveyed employees?

Research Significance

Theoretical Significance

This study contributes to management knowledge by integrating self-determination theory and goal-setting theory within a single framework. Self-determination theory explains the quality and internalization of motivation, while goal-setting theory explains how motivation can become focused effort and persistence. The empirical model intentionally tests the overall motivation–performance relationship because the public dataset provides a concise general motivation composite rather than complete subscales for every motivational regulation.

The study uses the published questionnaire and supplementary workbook documented by Mgamal and Al-Matari [8]. Six job-feeling items form the motivation composite, and five self-report task items form the employee-performance composite. Using a documented public source strengthens transparency because the instrument, raw responses, scoring decisions, and analysis can be independently checked.

Practical Significance

For managers, the findings can provide evidence for designing motivational systems that combine fair rewards with meaningful work, recognition, employee development, autonomy, supportive supervision, and clear goals. Rather than assuming that one policy motivates all employees, decision makers can identify the motivational dimensions most strongly associated with performance. The results can inform human resource planning, performance management, leadership development, reward design, and employee engagement initiatives.

For employees, better motivational practices may create a more supportive and purposeful work environment. When employees understand goals, perceive fair treatment, receive feedback, and have opportunities to develop, they are more likely to invest sustained effort. For organizations, such conditions may improve service quality, productivity, retention, innovation, and responsiveness. The study is therefore relevant to both employee experience and organizational effectiveness.

Research Questions

The main question is supported by the following specific research questions:

No.	Research question
RQ1	What is the level of employee motivation among the surveyed employees?
RQ2	What is the level of employee performance among the surveyed employees?
RQ3	Does employee motivation have a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance?

Research Objectives

The main objective is to assess the effect of employee motivation on employee performance. More specifically, the study aims to measure the level of employee motivation, assess the level of self-reported employee performance, test the correlation between the two constructs, estimate a simple regression model, and develop cautious managerial recommendations based on the strength and limitations of the evidence.

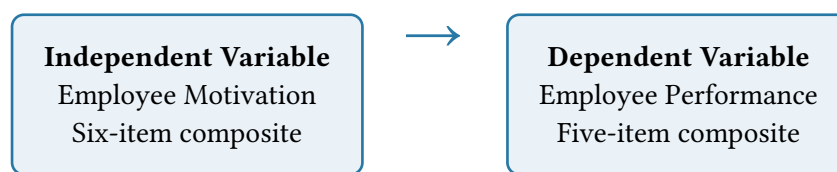
Research Hypotheses

The hypotheses are stated in testable form. Statistical significance will be evaluated at an alpha level of 0.05.

Code	Hypothesis
H1	Employee motivation has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance.
H0	Employee motivation has no statistically significant effect on employee performance.

Research Model

The conceptual model identifies employee motivation as the independent variable and employee performance as the dependent variable. Motivation is represented by a six-item general job-feeling composite, while performance is represented by a five-item self-report task-performance composite. The parsimonious model is designed to test the single relationship supported by the available public data.



The model predicts that stronger employee motivation will be associated with higher employee performance. Because the source instrument does not provide complete multidimensional motivation subscales, the empirical test uses one overall motivation score and does not claim separate intrinsic or extrinsic effects.

Scope of the Study

The study uses a public cross-sectional dataset containing 307 complete employee responses from Saudi Arabia and Yemen. The original survey was administered online during the COVID-19 period using purposive and snowball sampling [8]. The unit of analysis is the individual employee, and both constructs are self-reported.

Conceptually, the study is limited to the overall employee-motivation composite and the overall employee-performance composite contained in the source questionnaire. Other factors such as leadership, organizational support, technology, health, ability, and role clarity may also affect performance, but they are outside the primary model. Geographically and temporally, the evidence is bounded by the two Middle Eastern countries and the pandemic context; generalization beyond that setting must therefore be cautious.

Project Structure

The project is organized into five chapters. Chapter One presents the research background, problem, significance, questions, objectives, hypotheses, conceptual model, and scope. Chapter Two reviews theories and empirical studies concerning employee motivation, employee performance, and the relationship between them. Chapter Three explains the research design, population, sampling, data collection, measurement, and statistical procedures. Chapter Four reports sample characteristics, validity and reliability, descriptive statistics, correlations, regression tests, and interpretation of findings. Chapter Five presents limitations, recommendations, future research directions, and the conclusion.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter examines the theoretical and empirical foundations of the proposed relationship between employee motivation and employee performance. It first explains the independent variable, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and the principal theories used to understand them. It then discusses the dependent variable and the difficulties involved in measuring employee performance. Finally, it reviews empirical evidence linking motivation with performance and develops the logic supporting the hypotheses.

Employee Motivation

Employee motivation concerns the forces that energize, direct, and sustain work behaviour. This definition emphasizes that motivation is not identical to ability or performance. An employee may possess excellent skills but invest little effort, while another may exert strong effort without having adequate knowledge or resources. Performance therefore depends on a combination of motivation, ability, role clarity, opportunity, and organizational support. The managerial value of motivation lies in its capacity to influence how employees use the abilities and opportunities available to them.

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation occurs when an employee engages in work because the activity is interesting, enjoyable, meaningful, or personally satisfying. The work itself supplies the reward. Intrinsically motivated employees may be more willing to explore alternatives, learn from feedback, persist through complexity, and protect quality even when direct monitoring is limited. This form of motivation is especially relevant to jobs requiring creativity, judgment, problem solving, knowledge sharing, and service orientation.

The meta-analysis by Cerasoli et al. found that intrinsic motivation predicted performance across diverse domains and explained more unique variance in performance quality than incentives [4]. This finding is consistent with the idea that interest and meaningfulness encourage deeper engagement rather than simple compliance. The broader self-determination theory meta-analysis also found that intrinsic motivation is especially important for employee well-being, attitudes, and positive work behaviour [3].

Intrinsic motivation can be supported when jobs provide autonomy, opportunities to use competence, constructive feedback, and connection with colleagues or beneficiaries. It can be weakened when employees experience excessive control, unclear priorities, monotonous tasks, unfair treatment, or a lack of resources. Managers therefore influence intrinsic motivation not only through communication, but also through job design, leadership behaviour, learning opportunities, and the degree of discretion employees possess.

Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation refers to behaviour directed toward outcomes separate from the activity itself. These outcomes include salary, bonuses, promotion, recognition, job security, performance ratings, and avoidance of sanctions. Extrinsic motivation is not necessarily harmful or inferior. Well-designed rewards can communicate priorities, recognize contribution, and encourage effort toward measurable goals. The evidence indicates that incentives can be relatively effective predictors of performance quantity [4].

However, extrinsic motivation varies in quality. External regulation involves acting mainly to obtain a reward or avoid punishment. Identified regulation occurs when employees accept the value of a task and view it as personally important. An employee may not enjoy completing a compliance

report, for example, but may willingly perform it because accurate reporting protects customers and the organization. The meta-analysis by Van den Broeck et al. found that identified regulation is particularly relevant to performance and organizational citizenship behaviour, whereas external regulation has less favourable outcomes overall [3].

The practical implication is that managers should not choose between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as if they were mutually exclusive. They should create fair rewards while helping employees understand the purpose of goals, participate in decisions where possible, receive useful feedback, and connect tasks with personally and socially valued outcomes. Balanced systems can recognize results without reducing work to short-term reward seeking.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-determination theory proposes that motivation ranges from amotivation through controlled forms of regulation to autonomous forms. It emphasizes three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to experiencing choice and ownership of action. Competence refers to feeling effective and capable of mastering challenges. Relatedness refers to feeling respected and connected to others. Work contexts that support these needs are more likely to promote autonomous motivation.

Large cross-national evidence supports the relevance of context. Vo et al. analyzed 32,614 individuals across 25 countries and reported positive associations between autonomy, social relatedness, and work motivation, while also showing that social and cultural conditions can moderate motivational relationships [2]. This suggests that universal motivational principles operate within local organizational and societal conditions. Managers should therefore adapt practices to their workforce rather than applying identical incentives without considering employee expectations and cultural context.

Goal-Setting Theory

Goal-setting theory explains how motivation becomes directed action. Locke and Latham's synthesis of 35 years of research concluded that specific and challenging goals generally improve performance more than vague instructions such as "do your best," assuming commitment, ability, feedback, and resources are adequate [5]. Goals affect performance by directing attention, increasing effort, extending persistence, and encouraging the development of strategies.

For goal systems to motivate effectively, employees need to understand expectations, perceive goals as attainable with effort, receive timely feedback, and have access to relevant resources.

Participation can strengthen acceptance when goals are complex or potentially controversial.

Excessively narrow goals may also create unintended behaviour, such as sacrificing quality for quantity. Managers should therefore combine clear targets with ethical standards, quality indicators, learning goals, and opportunities for feedback.

Motivational Practices in Organizations

A comprehensive motivational system integrates financial and non-financial practices. Fair pay and benefits satisfy important expectations and reduce perceptions of inequity. Recognition communicates that contribution is noticed. Development and promotion opportunities support competence and future orientation. Autonomy and participation encourage ownership. Supportive supervision strengthens trust and relatedness. Meaningful work connects daily activities with customers, communities, or organizational purpose. Clear goals and feedback direct effort and enable employees to adjust their behaviour.

The effectiveness of these practices depends on consistency. Recognition will have limited motivational value if rewards are perceived as biased, while development programmes may not

motivate if employees see no opportunity to apply new capabilities. Similarly, ambitious goals can demotivate when resources are inadequate. Management should therefore evaluate the motivational climate as an integrated system rather than treating each practice as an isolated intervention.

Employee Performance

Employee performance concerns the extent to which an individual completes work duties effectively, reliably, and on time. It can include task performance, contextual contribution, adaptability, and counterproductive behavior, although the present project focuses on a concise self-report task-performance measure. Individual performance is conceptually distinct from organization-level financial or operational performance, even though employee contributions can aggregate into broader outcomes.

Objective indicators such as output, error rates, sales, attendance, or supervisor ratings can provide valuable evidence, but they are often unavailable in public cross-sectional surveys. Self-report measures are practical when employees understand their own tasks, yet they can be affected by social desirability, differences in interpretation, and common-method variance. Results should therefore be described as self-reported employee performance rather than audited performance.

The source questionnaire contains five items addressing completing tasks on time, perceived job performance, perceived quality, and effective completion [8]. Two positively worded items are reverse-scored so that higher composite values consistently represent better performance. Reliability and factorability must be checked before interpreting any relationship with motivation.

Relationship Between Employee Motivation and Employee Performance

The relationship begins at the individual level. Motivation influences attention, effort, persistence, learning, and strategy use. These behaviors can improve task completion, timeliness, and quality, although performance also depends on ability, resources, role clarity, health, and work conditions. Employee contributions may aggregate into organizational outcomes, but this study tests only the individual-level association captured by the source questionnaire.

The strongest broad evidence comes from meta-analysis. Cerasoli et al. synthesized 183 studies with 212,468 participants and found that intrinsic motivation was a medium-to-strong predictor of performance, with effect sizes varying by context and performance type [4]. Their results indicate that intrinsic motivation and incentives jointly predict performance, but intrinsic motivation contributes more to quality while incentives contribute more to quantity. A balanced model is therefore more defensible than a single-factor reward model.

Van den Broeck et al. synthesized 124 samples and found differentiated associations across motivational regulations [3]. Intrinsic motivation was strongly relevant to positive employee outcomes, and identified regulation was especially useful for predicting performance and citizenship behavior. These results explain why an overall positive relationship is plausible, while also cautioning that the general composite cannot reveal which regulation is most influential.

Causal interpretation is strengthened by longitudinal evidence. Wang et al. analyzed 84 correlations from 11 independent longitudinal studies involving 4,389 participants. Motivation at the first measurement predicted later performance after controlling for prior performance, whereas prior performance did not significantly predict later motivation [1]. Although the average directional effect was modest, it supports the proposition that motivation contributes to subsequent performance rather than merely reflecting it.

The relationship is unlikely to be automatic. Ability, resources, leadership, role clarity, job design, and external conditions can strengthen or weaken the conversion of motivation into results. A highly motivated employee cannot maintain quality without adequate tools, and a technically

capable employee may underperform when goals conflict or rewards are perceived as unfair. Motivation should therefore be interpreted as an important explanatory factor within a broader performance system.

Study	Method / sample	Central finding	Relevance to this project
Wang et al. (2024)	Meta-analytic SEM; 11 longitudinal studies; n = 4,389	Earlier motivation predicted later performance; reverse pathway was not significant.	Supports the directional logic of H1.
Van den Broeck et al. (2021)	Meta-analysis of 124 samples	Motivational regulations have distinct outcomes; identified regulation is important for performance.	Provides theory while cautioning against treating all regulations as identical.
Cerasoli et al. (2014)	Meta-analysis; 183 studies; N = 212,468	Intrinsic motivation predicts quality; incentives better predict quantity.	Supports an expected positive overall relationship.
Vo et al. (2022)	Multilevel analysis; 32,614 people in 25 countries	Autonomy and relatedness are positively associated with work motivation.	Supports contextual and non-financial motivational practices.
Locke & Latham (2002)	Review of 35 years of goal research	Specific, challenging goals improve performance under appropriate conditions.	Explains how motivation becomes focused effort.

Literature Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature provides consistent support for a positive link between employee motivation and performance, but it also shows that the relationship is more complex than a simple “higher reward equals higher performance” assumption. Different motivational regulations can have different consequences, and performance depends on many enabling conditions. The present model therefore tests a focused overall relationship rather than claiming that motivation is the sole determinant of performance.

The practical gap concerns whether the expected positive association is observable in a transparent Middle Eastern employee dataset collected under unusually demanding pandemic conditions. Applying reproducible scoring and statistical procedures to the published source can produce evidence that is academically grounded while clearly stating measurement and generalization limits.

Conclusion

This chapter reviewed employee motivation, employee performance, and the mechanisms connecting them. Self-determination theory explains why autonomous and controlled forms of motivation have different consequences, while goal-setting theory explains how clear and challenging objectives focus effort and persistence. Meta-analytic and longitudinal evidence supports the expectation that motivation is positively associated with performance. The review therefore provides a sound basis for H1. The next assignment develops the methodology required to test this proposition with the public employee dataset.

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Appendix A: Research Questionnaire Extract

Instrument Source

The items below reproduce the two research-variable sections of the openly published employee questionnaire and follow the variable order in the accompanying workbook [8]. The original survey was anonymous and was administered to employees in Saudi Arabia and Yemen during June–July 2020.

Section A: Demographic Information

The source dataset records gender, age in years, marital status, organizational tenure in years, level of education, and employment status. No names or direct personal identifiers are included in the analysis file.

Section B: Employee Motivation

For each statement, select one response on a seven-point scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree.

Code	Statement	Response
Q26	I felt much energy, pep, or vitality during the past few weeks.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Q27	I felt downhearted and blue during the past few weeks.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Q28	I felt bothered during the past few weeks.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Q29	I was emotionally stable and sure of myself during the past few weeks.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Q30	I felt cheerful and lighthearted during the past few weeks.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Q31	I felt tired, worn out, used up, or exhausted during the past few weeks.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Section C: Employee Performance

For each statement, select one response on a four-point scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree.

Code	Statement	Response
Q21	It is not always easy for me to perform tasks on time.	1 2 3 4
Q22	When I have a deadline to perform a certain task, I always finish it on time.	1 2 3 4
Q23	I always leave my tasks to the last minute.	1 2 3 4
Q24	Sometimes, I feel disappointed with my performance at work because I know I could have done better.	1 2 3 4
Q25	I consider myself a fundamental worker in my organization because of the high quality of my performance.	1 2 3 4

Appendix B: Table of Research Instruments

Variable	Operational dimension	Items	Scale	Reverse-scored workbook items	Source
Employee Motivation	Energy, vitality, positive affect, and emotional stability	6	1–7	Q27, Q28, Q31	Mgammal & Al-Matari (2021)
Employee Performance	Self-reported task timeliness and work quality	5	1–4	Q21, Q23, Q24	Mgammal & Al-Matari (2021)

The instrument contains 11 substantive items for the two research variables. Negative statements are reverse-scored before computing arithmetic-mean composites, so higher scores consistently represent stronger motivation or better self-reported performance. Reliability and factorability are examined before hypothesis testing. The workbook column order—not the printed questionnaire number order—is used to preserve exact reproducibility.