

## **A Comparative Study of Motivation Strategies by Faculty Members, Managers and Employees**

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**Abstract:** Motivation leads to behaviors. People who are motivated try more than those who are not. This study aims to compare motivation strategies by faculty members, managers and employees working in Payame Noor University (PNU) Lorestan Province, Iran according to Topsis technique.

**Key words:** Motivation, motivation criteria, motivation strategies, Topsis Model, motivating factors

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Managers act in regard with objectives in order to achieve organizational objectives. Therefore, they are required to pay attention to motivation. Motivation is considered the basis of effort and collaboration of human resources in organizations. To enhance working motivation of employees, their expectations need to be regarded because needs have a direct relationship with motivation.

**Problem statement and objectives:** One of the primary tasks of managers is to provide motivation in a high level of performance. It means that managers need to ensure that employees work, attend the work regularly and have a positive share in organization's objective. Job performance is associated with ability, environment and motivation. Therefore, designing motivation strategies is considered one of the most effective tools to promote organizational performance. Organization's activities are performed by employees. Conducted studies in this field show that successful organizations have motivated employees. Lack of motivation leads to reduced efficiency and effectiveness in organization, leading to declined productivity. As a result, the level of production declines, dissatisfaction rises among employees and finally leads to dissatisfaction of customers and destruction of organization. Therefore, any organization is supposed to take essential policies and measures in this regard. Motivated lectures and employees in PNU play a vital role in education and scientific promotion, non-productive community. This aims to study the effective indicators in motivation and

compare motivation plans according to the opinions of faculty members, managers and employees in Payame Noor University in Lorestan Province using Topsis technique.

**Research questions:** The questions outlined here are based on the following questions:

- What is the most important motivation criteria stated by faculty members, managers and employees?
- Which motivation strategy is rated higher by faculty members, managers and employees in Payam Noor University centers in Lorestan Province, Iran?

### **Theoretical principles and literature review**

**Motivation:** Motivation is tendency toward a work in order to accommodate a need. Need means mental and physiological requirement which can attract a certain achievement. Motivation is internal state which makes human to perform an activity (Rezaeian, 2006). Motivation is the prerequisite for better organizational performance. It is defined as an internal process directing individual internally (Grafham *et al.*, 2004). Motivation also describes power of an individual which has caused effort at work place (Johns, 2006). As John Lock and Latam stated motivation is not only a natural factor but also a group of measures. Porter and Milles consider three types of feature for motivation: individual features (interests, attitudes, needs, expectations of individuals from various working conditions) job features (job identity and nature, working hours, job enrichment or vertical

development, task diversification or horizontal development, team working and job rotation) and working environment features (working environment close to colleagues and supervisors, organizational actions and organizational culture) (Alvani, 2003). Motivating employees is one the main duties of management. It means that creating or strengthening internal force leads to certain behaviors. The most important factors or variables leading to motivation are religious beliefs, fair treatment, accommodating financial needs, objective attractiveness, attention, encouragement and prize, suitable job design which consists of job engineering, job development, job rotation, job enrichment, group jobs and job's satisfactory characteristics. Motivation plays dependent and independent roles. As an independent variable, it explains various theories, i.e., Atkinson defines motivation as direct penetration with respect to power and continuity while Vroom (1964) defines it as a dominant process to select from various voluntary activities performed by an individual. Pinder (1998) explains that work motivation is a set of energetic forces internally and externally. At the beginning, it is associated with working behavior and it is raised as a dependent variable (Johnson, 2002). Motivation is defined as "the aim of behavior". Despite all theories and definitions in this regard, Landy and Becker believe that it is a general agreement in which the motivated behavior consists of intention, guidance, perseverance, insistence and termination (Kooij *et al.*, 2008).

**Motivation and its impact on organizational performance:** Motivation is not just a way to pursue organizational goals. Strategies such as recognition of achievement, empowerment and individual attention can be the most effective ways to motivate them and create a link between the organization and the employee. A motivated employee is easily identified by some criteria such as agility, commitment and sacrifice, enthusiasm, concentration, overall performance and contribution to organizational goals (Adzei and Atinga, 2012). The quality and quantity of organizations depend on each single performance of organization and performance of an employee depends on motivation and competence. Nahavandi and Malekzadeh (1993) found that motivation is closely linked with organizational performance management issues. They defined motivation as "a mental state, tendency, energy or interest which leads to action".

The actions are observed as performance. Performance is effective when employees are effectively motivated (Vilma and Egle, 2007). Stynen *et al.* (2014) empirically studied the role of "motivation to work" by two methods. Seyed Javad Al-Din studied the hybrid model of motivation among employees working in Oldha Tehran Regional Electric Company. The results showed that two factors including job nature and promotion are the most effective factors in motivation. Salary and wage, however, were not directly effective in motivation. Franco *et al.* (2004) studied effective factors in motivation among employees working in hospitals in two countries with various conditions and culture including Jordan and Georgia. They found many similarities among effective factors in motivation such as self-confidence, pride, open and honest management, job characteristics such as job security and effectiveness (Franco *et al.*, 2004). The results of the study conducted by Jafacri *et al.* (2012) entitled "Effective Motivation-Based Management in Knowledge-Based Organizations" showed that the most important factors consist of organizational trust, attention to the quality of work, regarding creative thinking and innovative activities, managers styles in communication and interaction among knowledge-based employees, effective team work, moral values and creating sustainable trends instead of relying on individuals. The results of study conducted by Hossein Pour entitled "The Effect of Work Diversity on Motivation among Employees Working in Semnan Transportation Organization (Shahroud)" show that work diversity is found to have a linear, positive and significant relationship with motivation. Davoudi *et al.* (2012) conducted a study entitled "The Relationship of Organizational Culture and Motivation with Job Satisfaction among Teachers Working in Touyserkan". The results showed that organizational culture and motivation are found to have a significant relationship with job satisfaction. The results also showed that motivation, organizational culture and age are significant predictors of job satisfaction. Raeesi concluded that employees claim that adequate salary and benefits, appropriate working conditions and job security ranked first to third. The employees under consideration are engaged with the first class in Maslow's hierarchy of needs-physiological and safety needs and their managers are somewhat aware of this issue. In this study, job security is also highly regarded in motivation. It seems that the difference in relative importance of motivation, claimed by faculty

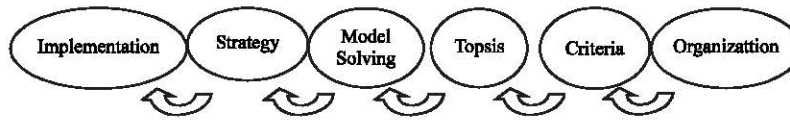


Fig. 1: Topsis to select the strategy

members and others is associated with economic, social and cultural differences as well as time which require additional studies. Ebrahim Fehli studied effective factors in motivation among employees working in Islamic Revolution Martyrs Foundation. The results showed that financial and economic factor, participatory management, perceived equality, occupational-educational promotion, the value of activity in the foundation and ensuring the achievement of the objectives are effective in motivation. A significant difference was found among males and females concerning above mentioned factors. A significant difference was found concerning the level of motivation in various provinces. Huey Ming conducted a study entitled “The Effect of Job Motivation on Job Satisfaction among Nurses”. They found that nurses in higher level of nursing have more satisfaction and motivation toward their jobs. Nurses in lower level of nursing show lower level of satisfaction and motivation (Davoudi *et al.*, 2012).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

An applied, mathematical survey was performed. Deductive-inductive reasoning was employed. Deductive reasoning was employed to collect information through library archives, internet, articles and interviews with some senior directors of the organization. Inductive reasoning was employed to accept or reject the hypotheses. The desk study consists of two sections. The first section is associated with the strategy of motivation and the second section is concerned with motivation indicators and criteria. In this study, after extracting indicators through literature review, important ones are selected and considered the basis of motivation plans in higher-education centers. Then, motivation strategies were evaluated using Shannon and Topsis mathematical algorithms. The statistical population consists of all managers, faculty members and employees (contracted and employed) in 9 Payam Noor branches (Khorram Abad, Boroujerd, Ali

Goudarz, Aleshtar, Pol Dokhtar, Doroud, Kouhdasht, Nour Abad and Azna). Due to the complexity of matrix, some samples were randomly selected for the study. To collect the data, matrix questionnaire (10 items and 15 criteria) was employed. This questionnaire assesses 15 motivation strategies according to 10 effective criteria and performance indicator in motivation. Each home of the table is filled with numbers ranging from 1-9. The numbers are selected according to the importance of criteria to determine strategy and performance. The data are collected through questionnaire and decision matrix. Topsis is a technical and strong decision-making method to prioritize according to the proximity to the ideal response. Therefore, the selected item needs to have the shortest distance from the ideal response and the farthest from the worst response. Topsis model is one of analytical model in operations research extensively used to select and prioritize the options according to the proximity to ideal response or avoidance of critical response. Topsis was developed by Hwang in 1981 extensively used in operations research for decision-making, implementation and control policies by decision makers and performers. (Azar and Rajab Zadeh, 2014) (Fig. 1).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Data analysis:** In this study, the matrix obtained from the statistical population which consists of various motivation strategies was developed. Then, they are analyzed by Shannon and Topsis mathematical algorithms within tables and matrix. Generally, data analysis is performed in two steps:

- First step: calculation of weighted coefficient for each of indicators
- Second step: ranking plans and motivation strategies

### The first research question:

- What is the most important motivation factor stated by faculty members, managers and employees working in Payam Noor University in Lorestan Province?

Table 1: Comparing weighted coefficient of motivation criteria and indicator

Wj	Faculty member	CI employee	CI managers
Satisfaction job	0.040470	0.083053	0.035237
Strengthen organizational communication	0.055402	0.081515	0.073604
Organizational commitment	0.121674	0.112492	0.097045
Positive image of the organization	0.103616	0.078687	0.066237
Effort	0.120136	0.109771	0.076456
Achieving the goals and expectations	0.081836	0.068401	0.058730
Strengthen employee morale	0.113978	0.109241	0.092272
Supply of Social needs employees	0.108989	0.102475	0.146781
Supply of financial needs	0.131354	0.141315	0.106035
Conflict and constructive competition	0.122538	0.113049	0.247604

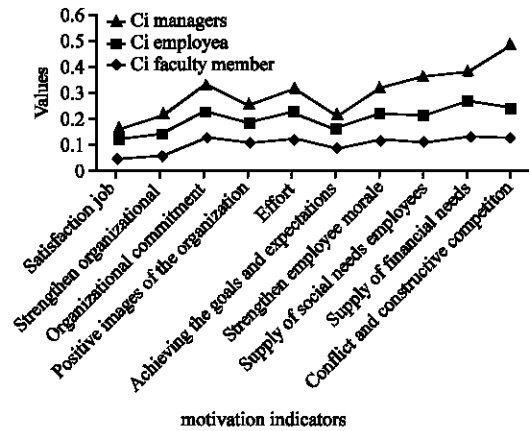


Fig. 2: Importance coefficient of motivation indicators

Shanon algorithm is as follows:

- First step (decision matrix): in this stage, decision matrix of data is explained by 10 items and 15 criteria according to the bipolar spectrum, discussed in chapter 3, ranging from 1-9
- Second step ( $P_i$  matrix): in this stage, decision matrix is changed into  $P_{ij}$  by:

$$P_{ij} = \frac{r_{ij}}{\sum r_{ij}}$$

- Third step: calculating  $E_j$  entropy table,  $d_j$  deviation degree and  $W_j$  final weight

Comparing weighted coefficient of motivation criteria and indicator stated by faculty members, managers and employees working in Payam Noor University in Lorestan province, Iran (Table 1 and Fig. 2).

**The second research question:**

- Which motivation plan is rated higher by faculty members, managers and employees working in Lorestan PNU?

Topsis is utilized for this study. Topsis steps:

- First step: decision matrix
- Second step: dimensionless decision matrix: in this step, an interface operation is obtained to achieve normalized (ND) matrix
- Third step: dimensionless balance decision matrix
- Fourth step e: calculating  $A^+$  positive ideal solution and  $A^-$  negative ideal solution. In this stage, positive and negative solutions are determined:

$$A^- = \min V_{ij}$$

(0.01621179, 0.014461353, 0.022727, 0.019049494, 0.0207389, 0.01499476, 0.023506471, 0.02615235, 0.040917667, 0.02090749)

$$A^+ = \max V_{ij}$$

(0.021862372 0.018289358 0.031525 0.025027368 0.0284762 0.0194265 0.031642277 0.03395007 0.063840129 0.02715923)

- Fifth step: calculating the size of distance in Euclidean norms as positive and negative ideal solution

$$\text{Distance for ideals values} \rightarrow SI^+ = \sqrt{\sum (a_{ij} - A^+)^2}$$

$$SI^- = \sqrt{\sum (a_{ij} - A^-)^2}$$

- Sixth step: calculating relative proximity  $A_i$  to the ideal solution. In this step, CI is obtained by:

$$CI = \frac{SI^-}{SI^- + SI^+}$$

Ranking is based on CI. Comparing CI motivation plans by faculty members, managers and employees working in Lorestan PNU according to Topsis (Table 2 and Fig. 3).

To create motivation among employees it is necessary to identify and accommodate the needs. One of the most important duties of managers is to

Table 2: CI comparision of motivation plans

Motivation plans	CI faculty member	CI employee	CI managers
Service compensation program optimization (salary and wage satisfaction)	0.680038954	0.767954048	0.613952866
Safety and health promotion	0.415493052	0.313404866	0.533839729
Participatory management (participatory decision making and planning)	0.572184968	0.359505522	0.442614536
Logical and fair assessment of performance	0.624489467	0.321062018	0.330169716
Satisfactory working condition	0.552965636	0.469420697	0.518568188
Job security	0.937070171	0.593246098	0.810395509
Rewrad	0.864225913	0.864895126	0.708628299
Organizational and Job promotion	0.748107647	0.641741565	0.713273605
Team work communication (tam work culture)	0.418814039	0.162383623	0.626714528
Optimal job design (job enrichment, job development, job diversification, etc.)	0.416369494	0.333958980	0.413845275
Educational-occupational promotion	0.539857599	0.456346063	0.678186562
Flexible working hours	0.243744000	0.420787555	0.573726957
Employee training and empowerment	0.386791294	0.433434698	0.805671751
Group communication and work	0.321684077	0.412252407	0.365395249
Decentralization (increased responsibility within job description such self-control and self-assessment)	0.041191106	0.383520245	0.178170099

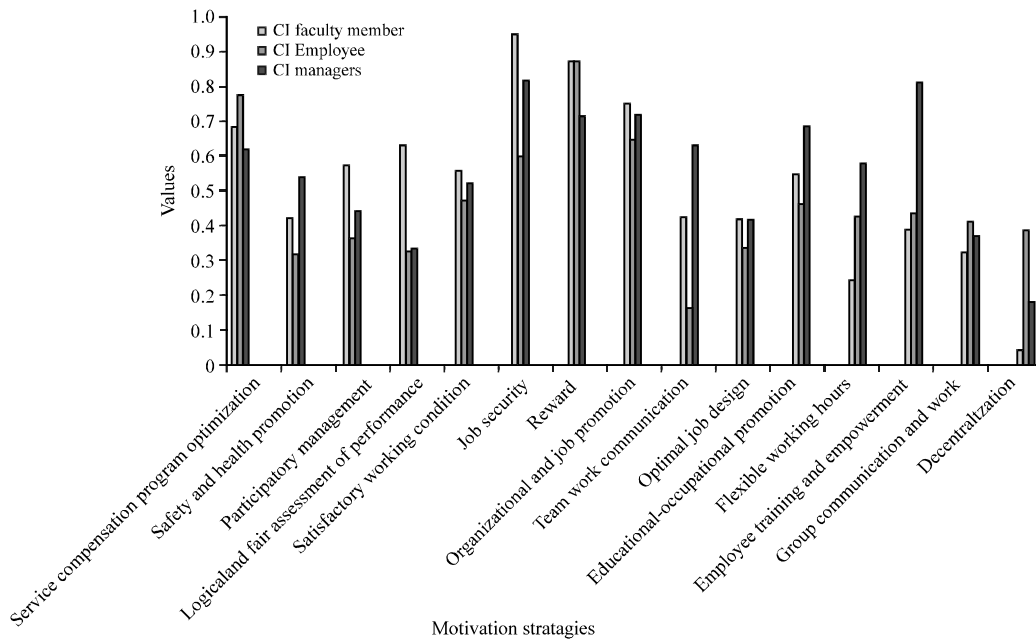


Fig. 3: Comparision of motivation strategieis

provide the platform to grow and flourish potential talents of employees. This would lead to higher level of effort. As stated in literature review, organizational motivation is one of effective factors in human resource productivity. Paying attention to optimal design of motivation strategies cause individuals to accept organizational objectives, respect organizational rules and regulations, try in accordance with organizational objectives and participate actively in organizational affairs. According to the importance of motivation in human resources, managers are recommended to be sensitive toward motivation. Motivation depends on designing appropriate working environment, organizational and working factors, from

one hand and accommodation of needs and objectives. Theorists consider effective human resource management and the role of human as vital and strategic factor in organizational success in varying and turbulent condition of organizations. Paying attention to the key role of human in development, progress and accommodating mental and spiritual needs of people is of great importance. Therefore, motivating individuals is one of the most important tasks for mangers. This study aims to rank motivation strategies according to Topsis in Lorestan Payam Noor universities. In order to extract and identify the most important factors, a desk study was performed. Important indicators were identified and they were

considered the basis of motivation plans, programs, and strategies. To determine the weight of indicators, Shanon was utilized. Taking weights into account, motivation plans and programs were ranked according to Topsis algorithm. Shanon was employed to analyze the data. Topsis algorithm is as follows:

- Faculty members in Lorestan Payam Noor University stated that “accommodating financial needs” is the most important motivation strategy ( $W_j = 0.13$ )
- Employees in Lorestan Payam Noor University stated that “accommodating financial needs” ( $W_j = 0.14$ ) and “organizational commitment” ( $W_j = 0.115$ ) are two important factors to determine the motivation strategy
- Managers in Lorestan Payam Noor University stated that “conflict and constructive competition” ( $W_j = 0.25$ ) and “accommodating social needs of employees” ( $W_j = 0.15$ ) are two important criteria to determine the motivation strategy
- Employees in Lorestan Payam Noor University stated that “reward” and “service compensation program optimization” (salary and wage satisfaction) were prioritized first and second
- Faculty members in Lorestan Payam Noor University stated that “job security” and “reward” were prioritized first and second
- Managers in Lorestan Payam Noor University stated “job security” and “training and empowerment” were prioritized first and second

### **CONCLUSION**

According to the data analysis by Shanon, faculty members believed that “accommodating financial needs” ( $W_j = 0.13$ ) is the most important. Employees believed that “accommodating financial needs” and “organizational commitment” ( $W_j = 0.14$  and  $W_j = 0.115$ ) are the most important factors while managers believed that “conflict and constructive competition” and “accommodating social needs of employees” are two important criteria ( $W_j = 0.25$  and  $W_j = 0.15$ ) to determine motivation strategies. According to the Topsis technique, employees selected “reward” (CI = 0.864895126) as the first factor and “service compensation program optimization” (CI = 0.767954048) as the second factor. Faculty members

selected “job security” (CI = 0.937070171) as the first and “reward” (CI = 0.864225913) as the second factor. Managers prioritized “job security” (CI = 0.810395509) as the first and “training and empowerment” (CI = 0.810395509) as the second factor.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

- Essential recreational facilities such as housing are provided for human resources in order to meet employee satisfaction and mental and physical health. Organizations require various tools and programs to create and promote motivation
- The directors of Payam Noor branches are required to pay more attention to mentioned factors
- Executive managers in Payam Noor University need to use motivation plan ranking in order to plan motivation for human resources
- Since, few studies have been conducted in this regard, more studies are required in this field
- Since just two algorithms were utilized in this study, other models such as Electere and AHP are proposed
- The next researcher takes effective measures to enhance the collaboration among the personnel

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