

Motivational Needs for Construction Industry Employees in Gulf Countries-Kuwait Case Study

Ehab Soliman¹, Hashem AlTabtabi² and Aisha AlMeer³

¹ Kuwait University

Received: 9 December 2019 Accepted: 2 January 2020 Published: 15 January 2020

Abstract

Kuwait is mentioned as one of multi-national workplaces. It is important to identify motivating factors that affect the workers in Kuwait construction workplaces. Maslow's hierarchy is the most common theory of motivation. Many studies investigated the application of Maslow's hierarchy in many places around the world. This study surveyed the motivational needs of employees working in the construction industry in Kuwait. A questionnaire designed to evaluate the motivation needs of employees for different public and private sector in Kuwait industry.

Index terms— kuwaitâ??motivation â??e mployee â?? c onstruction

1 Introduction

aslow's hierarchical theory describes the needs of a human being to be motivated. Maslow's theory is introduced in 1948-1953 by an American scientist Abraham Maslow. This theory is the base for all introduced motivation theories after that. Much research work conducted around the world to evaluate application of this theory. In this research, the motivational needs of employees who work in the Kuwait construction industry are identified. There is almost no research work studied the motivational sources of personnel working in the construction industry based on Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs. This study aims to identify the motivational factors that affect personnel performance who working in construction industry in Kuwait. These motivational factors are ranked based on the Maslow hierarchical levels and compare this rank of levels with which is driven by ??aslow. Many criticisms targeted Maslow's theory because it ignored some of the dynamics and emotional needs that might be added to human needs. In spite of this criticism, this theory is still valid and attracts many of research work and applications around the world.

2 II.

3 Objective

This study aims to identify the motivational needs of employees who work in the construction industry in Kuwait. The other objective is to compare these needs with what is proposed by Maslow's theory.

4 III.

5 Literature Review a) Motivation Definition

Motivation has been defined according to Cox et al. 2006 as "providing a drive to act to satisfy needs or desires". According to (Gagne & Deci, 2005), Motivation is divided into Intrinsic motivation and Extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation depends on the activity itself, and it states that the reason behind doing an activity is that the person finds the activity interesting and leads to self-satisfaction. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation requires contribution between the activity and other separable consequences such as tangible rewards, which

means that the satisfaction does not result from the activity itself but from the extrinsic consequences to which the activity leads.

6 b) Maslow motivation theory

This theory was developed by Abraham Maslow 1943-1954. It states that all people have needs and they are working towards satisfying those needs. The needs are arranged according to their importance in a 5 sequential hierarchical levels. Needs of the lower-order level must be fulfilled before the higher-order needs. Level one which the lowest level includes physiological needs which are the biological requirements for human survival such as food, drink, air, shelter, rest and sleep. If these needs are not satisfied the human body cannot function properly. Maslow considered physiological needs the most important as all the other needs become secondary until these needs are fulfilled. Level two includes safety needs such as protection from fear and pain, safe working environment, and job security. Level three includes the social needs and belongingness needs such as love, affection, relationships with family and friends. Level four includes self-esteem needs such as self-confidence, achievement, recognition, being respected by others and prestige. Level five which is the highest level of the hierarchy include self-actualization such as personal growth and fulfillment, opportunities for innovation and creativity and problem-solving. Maslow (1943) initially stated that individuals must satisfy lower level needs before progressing to meet higher level needs. However, he later stated that satisfaction of a needs is not an "all-or-none" phenomenon, confessing that a need must not be satisfied 100 percent before the next need emerges" (Maslow 1987).

Although this theory is invented in the early 20th century, it still attracts many studies and researches regarding application and criticism of this theory. Many of studies around the world discussed the application of Maslow's theory in motivating many sectors, types of workers, types of customers? and many others. Although this theory is widely accepted all over the world, there is criticism oriented to the theory. These critics summarized as:

- ? The theory assumes that all people practice motivational needs in the same order ignoring cultural and individual differences.
- ? The theory is rigid and not take into consideration the dynamic effect of the work environment.
- ? The theory ignores the unstable characteristic of employee needs.
- ? Also, substantial satisfaction of one need level doesn't necessarily lead to the next higher need level.

- ? The needs hierarchy is based on US cultural values which are basically individualistic. In collectivist societies, for example, social needs may be considered more important than physiological needs. In countries such as China, and Korea, which have collectivist cultures, belonging and security are significantly more important than growth or self-actualization. (Patrich, and Cianci 2003)
- ? The theory did not take into consideration the spiritual needs (Bouzenita and Boulanouar 2016).

In spite of so much criticism, Maslow's hierarchy theory continues to be popular, perhaps due to its simplicity and ease of application.

7 c) Kuwait construction industry

Kuwait state is one of the oil producer countries located in the gulf area. Kuwait is ranked as the tenth of oil producer list and it owns approximately 8% of world crude oil reserves (EIA 2016).

The construction contribution to GDP is about 7%. There are 177,696 persons working directly with this industry in Kuwait (CSB report 2014). There are many challenges facing the construction industry in Kuwait, but one of the most significant is low productivity (Jarkas and Bitar 2012), project time overrun (Soliman, 2010) and many other problems. Employees' motivation in the construction industry has a great role to handle some of these problems. There is very limited research work that dealt with employee motivation in the construction industry in Kuwait. This study is an attempt to understand the motivational needs that are affecting the workforce that working in the Kuwait construction industry. This investigation is conducted through a wide survey in many of different construction organizations in Kuwait.

8 IV.

9 Methodology

A questionnaire is designed to collect data regarding motivational factors that are affecting employees' motivation. These factors are driven from Maslow's theory.

10 a) Questionnaire design and sample

The questionnaire was distributed among a random sample in different working places including the public and private sector working in the construction industry in Kuwait. This sample contains the Ministry of public works, Kuwait Credit Bank, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Kuwait University, Kuwait Central Bank, Kuwait Finance House, National Bank of Kuwait, Kuwait Oil Company. The total number of questionnaires was 601 questionnaires and the completed number of returned questionnaires is 283 completed questionnaires by a rate of 47% of questionnaire return. The questionnaire formed in two parts. It started with participant general information. It asks about gender, age, educational level, and job title. The second part of the questionnaire was a question that includes factors that influence motivation among employees. The factors were chosen based

on the five needs of Maslow's theory with two factors representing each need. Salary and bonuses represent the physiological needs while job security and promotion/growth factors represent safety and security needs. Recognition received for doing the job and Enjoyment of the work factors represents social needs. Responsibility (being given responsibilities by management) and equality (being treated fairly) represent the self-esteem needs. The last need which is the self-actualization is represented by the last two factors which are expectancy (a belief that effort will lead to the achievement of a target) and relationships (having a good relationship with management and colleagues).

11 Global Journal of Management and Business Research

Volume XX Issue IV Version I Year 2020 () A © 2020 Global Journals

Each factor has 5 scale where the value of "1" stands for no influence whereas "5" shows the greatest influence. V.

12 Analysis and Discussion

13 a) Survey Respondent Demographics

Table 1 shows the study sample size analysis. The analysis is based on the sample of 283 responses which consists of 166 females and 117 males. Regarding education level, 65.4% of the respondents have a bachelor's degree 14.5% had a diploma, 14.1% had a master's degree and 6% had Ph.D. The number of respondents working in the public sector is 217 with 76.7% while the private sector employees were 66 with 23.3%. The sample included 227 employees with 80.2% and 56 managers with 19.8% as shown in table (1).

14 b) Motivational needs ranking

The Relative Importance Index (RII) was used to analyze and rank the data provided by the questionnaire. A rating scale of 1 to 5 was adopted with 1 representing the lowest level of effect and 5 representing the highest level. A relative importance index is a common tool used to rank different aspects for a questionnaire of Likert scale answers. The RII for each motivation factor is calculated by the following equation as used by (Fagbenle et al. 2004).

$$RII = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n w_i}{\sum_{i=1}^n w_i + \sum_{i=2}^n w_i + \dots + \sum_{i=n}^n w_i} \quad (1)$$

Where, w_i = Respondent's rating from 1 for no influence to 5 for greatest influence. n_i = frequency for each rate N = sample size. Table 2 shows the ranking of motivational needs based on RII values. As shown in Table 2, the first important level is the security level followed by the self-actualization level. The physiological needs level is ranked as the fourth level rank. Comparing the analytical motivational needs in Kuwait construction employees with what is mentioned by Maslow's theory showed that there is a big difference between them.

Kuwait state is one of the gulf countries with a high rate of income (Salary survey 2019). Employees in such countries might not have the same importance for facilitating physiological needs as they have been provided by most of these physiological needs. Because of oil price declination during the past few years, the government and private sectors cancelled many of the scheduled projects. Also, the offered jobs have been reduced dramatically during this period. This situation affects job security, so the surveyed employees rank security as the first rank for their motivational needs.

15 Relationships

In the coming section, we will distinguish the difference between motivational needs ranking for different surveyed categorizes.

16 c) Categorizes ranking of motivational needs

Tables 3 to 6 show the difference between surveyed categorizes and Maslow's theory motivational needs ranking. As shown in Table 3, the male category chose self-actualization, while the female group chose safety as their first motivational needs. Both of groups are different in needs ranking and the two groups are different than Maslow's hierarchical ranking. As shown in Table 4, both categorize who are working in public and private sectors chose safety as their first motivational needs. This is because of the instable situation of the economic situation in gulf due to oil price declination. Both groups are differencing than Maslow's hierarchical rank. Managers chose safety as their first motivational needs, while employees chose self-actualization as first need. Managers who have big experience and get more salary will find difficulty to get job if they lost their current jobs. So they search for a job with safety more than other needs. As shown from Table 6, the diploma and Ph.D. holders put physiological needs as first motivation, while bachelor holders chose safety and who have master's degrees chose to belong needs as their first motivator.

As shown from the above Tables that the ranking for motivational needs is different from each surveyed category.

17 d) Level of Agreement Between Different Respondents Categorizes

Table 7 shows the correlation factors for the surveyed categories. These factors are calculated using SPSS 25. As shown from Table 7, there is no remarkable correlation between surveyed categorizes ranking except the correlation between Diploma and Ph.D. holders. Table 3 shows also that there is no significance for most of these surveyed categorizes.

18 Research Limitation

Due to the small number of samples, the concluded results are controlled by this sample size. As this study is conducted in Kuwait, so the study results are limited to the work environment of Kuwait or any other similar work environment such as gulf countries.

19 VII.

20 Conclusion

Maslow's theory ranked the human motivational needs as in five hierarchical ranks. Lowest-order needs must be fulfilled before the higher-order needs. A questionnaire distributed to employees working in the Kuwait construction industry. RII and correlation factors were used to rank surveyed sample their motivational needs. In Kuwait, the most important motivational need was security more than physiological needs. Each surveyed category such as male, females, private, public sectors has their own motivational needs. All of the surveyed categorizes chose rank different than what is mentioned by Maslow. This study results prove that the motivational needs are changed due to differences in work conditions, gender, work environment and there is no common rank for motivational needs.

1

No %

Figure 1: Table 1 :

2

Global (sample size, N =283)

hierarchical needs level	Motivation Factors	RII	Ranking	Motivational Needs as per Maslow theory
physiological needs	Salary Bonuses	0.872085	1	1

Figure 2: Table 2 :

3

hierarchical needs level	Male Ranking	Female Ranking	Maslow Theory Rank
physiological needs	3	4	1
safety	2	1	2
love / belonging	4	2	3
self-esteem	5	5	4
self-actualization	1	3	5

Figure 3: Table 3 :

4

hierarchical needs level	Private Ranking	Public Ranking	Maslow Theory Rank
physiological needs	2	4	1
safety	1	1	2
love / belonging	4	3	3
self-esteem	5	5	4
self-actualization	3	2	5

Figure 4: Table 4 :

5

hierarchicalneeds level	Employee Ranking	Manager Ranking	Maslow Theory Rank
physiological needs	4	3	1
safety	2	1	2
love / belonging	3	2	3
self-esteem	5	5	4
self-actualization	1	4	5

Figure 5: Table 5 :

6

hierarchical needs level	Diploma Rank- ing	Bachelor Ranking	Master's Ranking	PhD Rank- ing	Maslow Theory Rank
physiological needs	1	4	5	1	1
safety	2	1	2	1	2
love / belonging	4	3	1	4	3
self-esteem	5	5	2	5	4
self-actualization	3	2	4	3	5

Figure 6: Table 6 :

7

public private

Figure 7: Table 7 :

168 [] , 10.1037/h0054346. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>

169 [Maslow ()] 'A theory of Human Motivation'. A H Maslow . *Psychology review* 1943. 50 p. .

170 [Soliman ()] *Delay Causes in Kuwait Construction Projects*, E M Soliman . 2010. Egypt. 7. Strut. Eng. Dept.,

171 Fac. of Eng., Alex Univ.

172 [Jarkas and Bitar ()] 'Factors affecting construction labor productivity in Kuwait'. A Jarkas , C Bitar . *J. Constr.*

173 *Eng. Manage* 2012. 138 (7) p. .

174 [Maslow ()] A H Maslow . *Motivation and personality*, (Delhi, India) 1987. Pearson Education. (3rd ed.)

175 [Bouzenita and Boulanouar ()] 'Maslow's hierarchy of needs: An Islamic Critique'. A Bouzenita , A Boulanouar

176 . *Intellectual Discourse Journal* 2016. 2016. 24 p. .

177 [Patrich and Cianci ()] 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Does It Apply In A Collectivist Culture'. A Patrich , R

178 Cianci . 10.1037/h0054346. *The Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship* 2003. 8 (2) p. .

179 [Cox et al. ()] 'Proposed subcontractor based employee motivational model'. R Cox , A Issa , A Frey . *Journal*

180 *of Construction Engineering and Management* 2006. 132 (2) p. .

181 [Gagn'e and Deci ()] 'Self-determination theory and work motivation'. M Gagn'e , E L Deci . *Journal of*

182 *Organizational Behavior* 2005. 26 (4) p. .

183 [Fagbenle et al. ()] 'The impact of non-financial incentives on bricklayers' productivity in Nigeria'. O Fagbenle ,

184 A Y Adeyemi , D Adesanya . *Construction Management and Economics* 2004. 22 p. .