Employee Motivation at IKEA Espoo

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How to motivate employees and the factors affecting motivation have been subjects of concern for many researchers and practitioners for decades. Until recently employees were primarily regarded as a factor of production (i.e. labor), and not, as in the current view, as an integral part of all businesses. Therefore, motivating employees has become essential in order to achieve the strategic goals of any company. However, due to the current state of competition in the job markets it has increasingly become a significant challenge for many companies to successfully motivate and retain their employees.

Monetary incentives are the most commonly used technique of motivation by the majority of organizations. However, recent studies have clearly indicated that money is just one of many motivational factors for employees, who may be equally influenced by having good working environments or opportunities for further career development among other motivators.

IKEA is one of the best-known companies for its well-designed, functional and sustainable home products offered at competitive prices. In 2012, IKEA was also chosen as the best employer in Finland. Within this context, the objective of this study is to determine whether the employees at IKEA Espoo are motivated at work or not. The study also attempts to identify the main motivating factors for the employees at IKEA Espoo.

This study was carried out using quantitative research methods. A questionnaire was formulated based on Lindner’s ten motivational factors and distributed among the 200 employees at the store. The data was analyzed with SPSS program.

The findings of this study indicate that the employees at IKEA Espoo are highly motivated and the factors that motivate them the most are interesting work, good working conditions, opportunities for promotion and career growth within the company and job security. The outcomes of the study are in accordance with the previous studies conducted at IKEA in general in Finland and also with various motivational theories presented in this study.

Key words motivation, employee motivation, incentives
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1 Introduction

How to motivate employees and what are the motivational factors has been a subject of debate for many researchers and practitioners for decades. In recent years, various theories about employee motivation have also been introduced. Nowadays, the issues of employee motivation/work motivation play a crucial role in many aspects of organizational operations and as such also attract much research on the topic. Until recently employees were primarily regarded as a factor of production (i.e. labor), but the globalization and advancement in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have brought about various changes over the past few decades, which are having a considerable impact on the world of work. The prosperity and sustainability of the global wealth depends on the human labor force. In this regard, motivating employees is essential in achieving the company’s strategic goals. The motivational factors may, however, be subjective: what appeals to one may be utterly preposterous to others and thus, a general rule of thumb could not be established within a company to encompasses all the staff. Consequently, one of the most compelling challenges facing today’s organizations is how to make sure that employees are highly motivated.

As far as the issue of employee motivation is concerned, the most appealing and commonly used technique can be found in the form of incentives programs provided by the company. The causality of employee motivation has evolved over the years; monetary incentive were administered previously to boost the motivation, nevertheless, with the wobbling of the global economy, employees look forward to a security and insurance in their job to motivate themselves.

1.1 The Purpose of the Study

The theoretical assumption is that it is essential for every company to have motivated employees in order to gain success and to maintain long-term profitability. Motivated employees work harder for the company and remain at the company, ultimately reducing the company’s employee turnover. It should be understood, however, that retaining employees and motivating them is not an easy task and companies who fail to do that can also fail to gain competitive advantage against competitors. IKEA, being one of the best-known companies for its well-designed, functional and sustainable home products at the lowest possible prices, motivating its large number of employees becomes a challenge.
In 2012, IKEA was also chosen as the best employer in Finland (Talouseläma magazine, 3 February 2012). Having worked in IKEA for several years and having had hands-on working experience with the company, the authors became curious about finding out whether the employees in IKEA Espoo are motivated at work and what are the motivating factors for them. In addition, it will also try to find out the role of incentives in motivating the employees in IKEA. This study is strictly focused on the motivational factors of the employees at IKEA Espoo.

1.2 Research Question

The main questions of this study are:
1. Are the employees at IKEA Espoo motivated or not?
2. What does the term “incentive” mean to employees at IKEA?
3. What are the main motivational factors for employees at IKEA Espoo?

1.3 Research Method and Data analysis

This survey was carried out with quantitative method and in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised of motivation factors based on Lindner's ten motivational factors in order to test the motivational factors of the employees at IKEA Espoo. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

1.4 Theoretical Approach

Many theorists and business leaders have discussed employee motivation over the past few decades, “organisational researchers see employee motivation as a fundamental building block in the development of effective theories “, (Tremblay 2009). Employee motivation is taken more seriously at present than in the past. Earlier, only monetary incentives were taken as the main source of motivation, but this has changed in recent years. During periods of economic downturns employees look forward to having a secure job than to having more monetary incentives. In general terms, it can be said that the main elements of the employee motivation are work environment, job security, career advancement opportunity, good wages, understanding attitudes from the management etc.

The reviewed literatures for this study are Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Douglas McGregor Theory X and Theory Y, McClelland’s theory of needs, Herzberg Two Fac-
tor Theory, Vroom’s expectancy theory, Adam’s equity theory and Locke and Latham’s goal setting theory, and Elton Mayo’s Hawthorne effect theory.

The questionnaire of this survey was developed on the basis of Lindner’s ten motivational factor theories.

1.5 Framework of the Thesis

The thesis consists of five sections (see figure 1); Introduction, Theoretical Background, Research Method, Empirical Study and Conclusion with Recommendations.

In the introduction section (section 1), the purpose of the study, research questions, research and data analysis methods, theoretical approach and the framework of the thesis are discussed.

In the theoretical background section (section 2), the concept of motivation and various theories of motivation are reviewed and discussed. This section also consists of the elaborations of other concepts of motivation and motivation incentives.

Research and analysis methods are described in section 3.

The details of the empirical study are explained in Section 4. In addition, research findings and summary of research findings are also illustrated in this section.

In the final section (section 5) of this thesis consists of the conclusions and recommendations.
2 Theoretical Background

2.1 Motivation

According to Stephen P. Robbins, motivation occurs when an individual interacts in a situation (Robbins & Judge & Campbell 2010, 140). Motivation is also the efforts towards any goal or the reasons for engaging in a particular human behavior. These efforts or reasons may include the basic needs such as food or a desired object, hobbies, goals or just the state of being. Motivation for some certain behavior may also occur for less-obvious reasons like humanity or morality. Motivation level can be situation, time and issue specific. In this chapter rather than discussing the gen-
eral motivation concepts, work motivation concepts will be focused in order to reflect on the interests of this study.

There are no generally accepted meanings of work motivations as researchers have their own way to describe it in their own terms. Robbins et al. 2010 defines motivation as the reason behind an individual’s intensity, direction and persistence of effort in achieving a goal. Jones & George (2003, 405) define motivation as the psychological forces that determine the direction of a person’s behavior in an organization, a person’s level of effort, and a person’s level of persistence in the face of obstacles. McShane & Von Glinow (2000, 33) defines motivation as the forces within a person that results in his or her intensity, direction and persistence of conduct. Craig C. Pinder (1998) defines motivation in the concrete way. Pinder (1998) used the work of Jones, Locke, Shaw, Saari, Vroom, Steers and Porter and came up with the following definition: “Work motivation is a set of energetic forces that originate both within as beyond an individual’s being, to initiate work-related behaviour, and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration”. Pinder (1998, 11)

Therefore, with this framework of definitions, motivation in general terms can be referred to the direction, intensity and persistence of human behavior. As such, direction, intensity and persistence can be considered as the three main elements of motivation.

2.2 Motivation Types: Intrinsic and Extrinsic

Based on the various theories of motivation, it appears that there are two basic types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation arises from task itself, while extrinsic motivation comes from expectations of external rewards. According to Amabile (1994), individuals are intrinsically motivated when they seek enjoyment, interests, satisfaction of curiosity, self-expression or personal challenge in the work. On the other hand, individuals are extrinsically motivated when they are engaged in the work in order to obtain some goal that is apart from the work itself.

Intrinsically motivated employees like to have substantial freedom to make decisions, a channel to express creativity, opportunities for advancement, recognition for good work, and be treated in a polite and thoughtful manner. They possess the passion to take on tasks that are both challenging and meaningful and they feel an inherent sense of accomplishment when they complete the tasks successfully.
In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from outside of an individual in exchange for external rewards, which is not resulting from the work itself. Extrinsic motivation takes place in the form of tangible monetary or non-monetary incentives such as pay rise, gift certificates, vacation trips, wall plaques, company banquets, movie tickets etc.

While extrinsic rewards can act as positive reinforcers and have found to be an effective tool for short-term gains (Adams 2007, 232) i.e. meeting immediate goals, it may have long-term adverse impacts on employees’ behavior. Considerable number of research results indicates that employees who do not expect to receive extrinsic reward outperform those who expect reward (Kohn, 1993). However, extrinsic rewards can still be useful if administered under the right circumstances, such as the absence or low levels of intrinsic motivation or when the job is unchallenging and mundane. It is important to keep this in mind as we go through the numerous theories of motivation that are outlined below.

2.3 Content Theories of Motivation

The content theories emphasize on what motivates people. These theories suggest that motivated behavior occurs because work fulfills psychological needs. These theories are concerned with individual goals and needs that are said to be the same for every person. Although, they assume that all people possess a similar set of needs, they differ in defining what those needs are. Content theories include Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs, Douglas McGregor’s X and Y theory, David McClelland’s Needs theory, and Herzberg two-factor theories.

2.3.1 Hierarchy of Needs Theory

‘Hierarchy of needs’ theory introduced by Abraham Maslow is one of the most well-known and widely cited theories of motivation. Conceptualized with the infamous five stages of human needs (i.e. Physiological, Safety, Social, Esteem and Self-actualization) that influence motivation. Maslow believed that a hierarchy of needs exists within every human being and one must satisfy lower level of needs before progressing on to meet higher level. Once lower level of needs have been reasonably satisfied, then one may be able to reach the highest level of needs which is called self-actualization.
Physiological needs include food, water, shelter and other bodily needs for the continuation of human life.

Safety needs include security and protection from physical and emotional harm. Safety needs are important for survival but not as demanding as physiological needs. Examples of safety needs can be job security, health insurance, safe working environment and so forth.

Social needs include love, belongings, affection and friendship. Maslow considered these needs to be less basic than physiological and safety needs.

Esteem needs include internal factors such as self-respect, achievement, status and recognition. After satisfied with the first three needs, esteem needs become increasingly important to human beings.

Self-actualization is the paramount level of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Self-actualization needs refer to people seeking fulfillment and change through one’s personal growth. Self-actualized people are those who have already done what they are capable of and thereafter, seeking the meaning of their lives.

Maslow believes, everyone has a desire and is capable to move towards the level of self-actualization. He also states that, often this moving process is disrupted by failure to meet lower level of needs. Therefore, in order to motivate someone, it is important to know what level of hierarchy the person is currently on and focus on satisfying the needs at that level or a level above.
2.3.2 Theory X and Theory Y

Douglas McGregor came up with two different views to describe human behavior: one of which is negative called Theory X, and the other positive, called Theory Y. According to McGregor, managers’ views on the nature of employees are based on certain assumptions and the managers tend to mould their behavior towards employees according to these assumptions (Robbins et al. 2010, 142).

Theory X assumes that employees generally dislike their work and tries to escape whenever possible. Since the employees are lazy and dislike their responsibilities, they must be directed or warned in order to achieve company’s goal. In contrast to these negative views of employees, Theory Y assume that employees can view their work as normal and relaxing and if they are dedicated and responsible, they can achieve the company’s objectives.

Therefore, Theory X indicates the pessimistic view of employees’ nature at work while Theory Y shows an optimistic behavior of the employees. If this theory is compared to Maslow’s hierarchy theory, Theory Y assumes that higher order needs dominate individuals (Robbins et al. 2010, 143). McGregor himself believed that Theory Y is more valid than Theory X because responsible and challenging jobs, participative decision-making and good group relations are the main factors of employee’s work motivation.

2.3.3 McClelland’s Theory of Needs

David McClelland and his colleagues introduced McClelland’s theory of needs in 1961. According to this theory, a person’s motivation and effectiveness in a certain job function are influenced by three needs: the need for achievement, which is the need to accomplish in a relation to a set of standards and to strive to succeed; the need for affiliation, which is the need to incorporate with others; and the need for power, which is the need to have control over others and be influential (Robbins et al. 2010, 145).

The individuals with the desire to achieve high are highly motivated and explore for different opportunities at work. They like to set goals and take risk to achieve those goals. The individuals who are motivated by affiliation are effective team performers. They prefer working in supportive environment. They generally cannot be good leaders or managers because their decisions
are often disrupted as they have a high affiliation need and prefer to be accepted and liked by others, which weakens their objectivity. The people with power-oriented motivation are tend to be more influencing and controlling. They prefer their ideas and views to be domineering and they want to lead. People with high need for power and low need of affections are the best managers and managerial effectiveness requires high power motives. (Robbins et al. 2010, 145).

Despite of its best supportive research the McClelland’s theory is however hypothetical. Robbins et al. (2010, 145) states that it has less practical effect than other motivation theories because McClelland’s claimed the three needs are subconscious in a way that we may be high on these needs but not know it as measuring them is not easy.

2.3.4 Two Factor Theory

Psychologist Frederick Herzberg developed the two-factor theory, which is also known as motivation hygiene theory. According to Herzberg, some job factors lead to job satisfaction while other factors leads to dissatisfactions. Factors that lead to satisfaction are labeled as motivators, which are based on an individual's personal growth whereas hygiene factors (i.e. job security, salary, working conditions) tend to lead to dissatisfaction.
Herzberg argues that both factors are equally important, but good hygiene will only lead to average performance and prevents dissatisfaction, but it does not, necessarily create positive attitudes or motivation towards work.

In order to motivate the employees, management must improve the content of the actual work and the outcomes derived from the content i.e., opportunities for personal growth, promotional opportunities, achievement, responsibility and recognition.
2.4 Process Theories of Motivation

Content theories are centralised on the needs that all individuals share, and process theories are emphasised on the cognitive differences between individuals. Process theories are characterized as more dynamic and it attempts to explain more about how motivation occurs rather than what motivates people. Process theories explain how and why people’s behaviour is directed towards certain choices directed at the satisfaction of needs. The main elements of process theory models are drive, incentive, and expectancy and reinforcement. The best-known theories of process theories are Vroom’s expectancy theory, Adam’s equity theory, Locke and Latham goal setting theory and Elton Mayo’s Hawthorne effect theory.

2.4.1 Expectancy Theory

Victor Vroom developed a mathematical model theory to explain motivation, known as expectancy theory, which is one of the most widely, accepted motivational theories. Although there has been criticism about the theory, most of the evidence supports the theory (Robbins et al. 2010, 158).

Expectancy theory states that employees will be motivated to put more efforts when they believe that their effort will lead to a good performance evaluation and they will be rewarded with bonuses and promotions. Accordingly, these rewards will satisfy the employees’ personal goals (Robbins et al. 2010, 158). The idea behind this theory is that employees will be motivated when they believe that their behavior will lead to desired rewards or outcomes. If they do not believe that their behavior will lead to desired outcomes or rewards, they will not be motivated to work. Vroom’s expectancy theory focuses on three elements:

- Effort-performance relationship: the prospect of putting more effort leads to high levels of performance.
- Performance-reward relationship: It refers to the degree to which the employee believes that getting a good appraisal leads to organizational reward.
- Rewards-personal relationship: It refers employee’s attractions towards rewards resulting into satisfying their personal goals.

Therefore, Vroom states that the level of employee motivation can be calculated by the following equation:
Motivation = Expectancy x Instrumentality x Valence

According to Vroom, motivation is determined by above three elements: Expectancy is influenced by factors such as possession of appropriate skills, education, experience and training for performing the job. Instrumentality is the faith that if you perform well, then a valid outcome will be there. Valence is the strength associated with an individual about the expected outcome.

2.4.2 Equity Theory

Psychologist John Stacey Adams came forward with his equity theory model in 1962, which emphasizes on the importance of determining motivation as a relative but not an absolute factor. This theory recognizes the variable factors of other motivation theories that can affect employee’s assessment and perception of their relationship with their work and the employer. However, this theory points out employees compare their job inputs and outcomes with other employee’s inputs and outcomes and try respond to reject any inequities. Adams argues that human beings are motivated to act in situations which they perceive to be inequitable or unfair. Equity theory argues that the more intense the perceived inequity, the higher the tension and the stronger motivation to act. Adam proposed that we compare our rewards (pay, recognition) and contribution (time, effort, ideas) with the outputs and inputs of others and thus respond differently to over-reward and under-reward (Buchanan & Huczynski 2004, 251). Equity thus exists when these ratios are equal:

\[
\frac{\text{My rewards (minus my costs)}}{\text{My effort and contribution}} = \frac{\text{Your rewards (minus costs)}}{\text{Your effort and contribution}}
\]

Rewards can include a range of tangible and intangible factors, including pay, status symbol, promotions, and job security whereas inputs relate to investment made by employees i.e. skill, experience, effort and loyalty (Buchanan & Huczynski 2004, 251).

The core of the equity theory is the principle of balance or equity. According to this motivation theory, an individual’s motivation level is correlated
to his perception of equity, fairness and justice practiced by the management.

2.4.3 Goal Setting Theory

Edwin Locke introduced the Goal Setting theory in 1960s. According to Locke, working with an aim leading towards a goal is a major source of work motivation for employees. The goals indicate an employee of the tasks that need done and the level of effort it requires in order to achieve the goals (Robbins et al. 2010, 149). This theory assumes that goal setting is directly linked to the performance of the task. An employee with definite and challenging goals provided with appropriate feedback from the management can lead to higher and better performance.

The main features of Goal Setting theory are:

- Goal difficulty: set goals for work performance at the levels which will stretch employees, but which are not beyond their ability levels.
- Goal specificity: express goals in clear and precise language, which leads to greater output and better performance.
- Participation: allow employees to take part in goal setting process that will make goal more acceptable and leads to more involvement.
- Acceptance: If management sets goals, ensure that they are adequately explained and justified, so that those concerned understand and accept them.
- Feedback: provide better and appropriate feedback to allow employees to adjust their behavior, if necessary, to improve performance.

This theory emphasizes on setting up specific and difficult goals with feedback to motivate the employees.

2.4.4 Hawthorne Effect Theory

In early 1930s Elton Mayo introduced the ‘Hawthorne Effect Theory’ after conducting a research with the workers at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electric Company in Chicago. According to Elton Mayo, motivation at work can be promoted by following factors:

- greater communication
- good teamwork
- showing interest in others
• involving others in decision making
• ensuring the wellbeing of others
• work is interesting and non-repetitive

This theory suggests that boredom and repetitiveness of tasks reduce motivation and motivation can be improved by making employees feel important, giving them a degree of freedom to make choices and acknowledging their social needs.

2.5 Lindner’s Theory of Motivation

James Lindner conducted a research in 1998 at Piketon Research and Extension Centre and Enterprise Centre at the Ohio State University and came up a wider clarification of the motivational factors theories. According to Lindner (1998), employee motivation is driven by interesting work rather than the financial compensation. For instance when employees’ income increases, money becomes less of a motivator for them and they start looking for something else. Lindner ranks the factors of motivation (from most motivating to least motivating) as followings:

• interesting work
• good wages,
• full appreciation of work done
• job security
• good working conditions
• promotion and growth in the organization
• feeling of being on things
• personal loyalty to employees
• tactful discipline
• sympathetic help with personal problems

Two other studies referred to by Lindner in his research had similar results also. The first study which was carried out by Kovach (1995) ranked the motivational factors in the order; interesting work, appreciation of work well done, and feeling of being on things. Kovach further states that the rankings by the supervisors indicates that their mutual perception of factors that motivate employees have not changed for past 50 years’ but the work characteristics rankings done by employees did change. Another study conducted by Harpaz (1990) ranked the following order: interesting work, good wages and job security. Lindner concluded from his own research and these two studies that, what motivates employees differs according to
the context in which the employees work. However, all the employees ranked interesting work as their most important motivational factor. (Lindner 1998)

2.6 Incentives as Motivational Tool

In current times, employees are more demanding of their employers than in the past. Employees want to be consulted and involved in an organization as a whole and not just to do his/her work. In addition, employees want recognitions for what they do. The current generation employees are not motivated by simple factors as money and they always look for something more complicated. As such, incentives play a pivotal role in motivating employees. However, not all incentives are effective and if not consider carefully, it can lead to spending millions of euros and yet fail to motivate the employees. For many years, researchers have advocated the use of incentives to motivate employees at work. There are several kinds of incentives and different companies have their own incentives programs. The classifications of incentives are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monetary Factors/Incentives</th>
<th>Non-monetary factors/Incentives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Attractive salary/wages and allowances.</td>
<td>• Job security and job enrichment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High rate of bonus.</td>
<td>• Fair treatment to employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Liberal monetary incentives</td>
<td>• Recognition of good work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allowances such as over time allowance, medical allowance, leave travel allowance, house rent, educational and recreation allowances and so on</td>
<td>• Encouragement for self-development and career development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Special incentives</td>
<td>• Delegation of authority to subordinates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Friendly working conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fair opportunity of promotion etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4: Motivational Factors
2.6.1 Monetary or Financial Incentives

Monetary incentives are offered in terms of money. Many researches have shown that money is the most important factors in motivating employees (Barber & Bretz, 2000). But many of the current researches indicate that monetary incentives are extremely attractive for employees at lower level and for employees at higher levels, non-monetary incentives are proven to be more effective. On the basis of numerous surveys, it is proven that money is only one of many motives of the employees. The prime element “is the wish to enjoy the feeling of worth, recognition, and respect on the part of others” (Latham 2007, 103).

2.6.2 Non-monetary Incentives

Besides monetary incentives, there are certain non-financial incentives that can satisfy the ego and self-actualization needs of employees. Non-monetary incentive programs, such as recognition, are quite prevalent. A recent survey of over 500 human resources and compensation managers by WorldatWork organization found that nearly 90% of the survey had employee recognition programs in place. The main advantage of non-monetary incentive programs over monetary is the effect that they have on employees’ intrinsic motivation. Some examples of non-monetary incentives are job security, suggestion scheme, job enrichment and promotion opportunities. (Morrell 2011)

2.7 Summary of the Theories

Maslow places ‘Physiological Needs’ at lower level of his ‘Hierarchy of Needs’ theory and money as the key motivator in this level. According to Maslow, money tends to have a motivating effect on employees for a short period. Maslow’s theory matches with Herzberg's two-factor model of motivation theory. According to Maslow, praise, respect, recognition, empowerment and a sense of belongingness are far more powerful motivators than money and he places these motivation factors at the higher levels of the hierarchy. This is in accordance with Douglas McGregor's Theory X and theory Y. McGregor places money in his Theory X category and considers it as poor motivator whereas, praise and recognition are placed in the Theory Y category considers them as stronger motivators than money.

Maslow and Herzberg theories are expanded by, Edwin Locke's Goal Theory (1960) and Victor Vroom's Expectancy theory (1964). These theories are more focused on cultural differences and the fact that individuals are motivated by different factors at different times.
On the contrary, David McClelland (1961) believes that employees could not be motivated by just the need for money. He states that extrinsic motivation (money) could extinguish intrinsic motivation such as achievement motivation. McClelland believes that satisfaction lay in aligning a person’s life with their fundamental motivations. In addition, John Stacey Adams (1962) believed in principle of balance or equity and points out that an individual’s motivation level is correlated to his perception of equity, fairness and justice practiced by the management.

In addition, Elton Mayo’s ‘Hawthorne effect’ model of motivation theory suggests that social contacts at the workplace are very important for employees and that boredom and repetitiveness of tasks lead to reduced motivation. Mayo believes that acknowledging their social needs and making them feel important could motivate employees.

Furthermore, in connection with Maslow’s and others theories of motivation, Lindner ranks employee motivation factors as: interesting work, good wages, full appreciation of work done, job security, good working conditions, promotions and growth in the organization, feeling of being in on things, personal loyalty to employees, tactful discipline, and sympathetic help with personal problems. These factors can be compared too Maslow’s model as; interesting work- self-actualizing factor, good wages- physiological factor, full appreciation of work done- esteem factor, job security-safety factor. Therefore, it is an indication that Maslow’s theory and other motivational theories can be applied in many situations.

Finally, various studies indicate that both monetary and non-monetary incentives as equally important in motivating employees depending on the individual’s behavior. Nevertheless, organizations cannot presume that the entire incentives scheme would be successful to motivate the diverse workforce. Taking Herzberg’s theory of needs into consideration, monetary incentives can prevent employee dissatisfaction but does not necessarily motivate. According to Maslow’s need theory, the lowest order of physiological needs must be fully met in order for the individual to progress to satisfy the next higher level of need. That means if employees do not receive a reasonable monetary compensation, then they will always be motivated monetarily until the sum is justified, or need is satisfied and, during which, the employee will unlikely be motivated by non- monetary incentives.
3 Research Method

This study was conducted in order to find out whether the employees of IKEA, Espoo are motivated or not and also to determine the factors that motivate them at work. In order to answer the goals of this study, 119 employees out of 200 from Sales, Customer Services and Logistics departments were randomly selected to make up the sample. The selected employees answered a survey questionnaire that was based on Lindner's ten motivational factors of today's employees, and structured in Likert format. Gathered data was analysed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for interpretation.

The data for this study was collected with a quantitative approach and with the use of survey questionnaire. Quantitative data collection methods are central for quantifying the relationship between the variables and this method establishes relationship between measured variables. The main features of this method are measurements, numerical data and statistics. The main focus of this method is detailed description of a phenomenon and this method basically provides generalisation of the gathered data with tentative interpretations.

3.1 Sample

The sample of this survey consisted of the employees in IKEA, Espoo. The total of 119 out of approximately 200 employees belonging to Sales, Customer Services and Logistics departments participated in this survey. Sales, Customer Services and Logistics departments are considered to be the core departments in IKEA. As such, the participants of this survey were strictly chosen from these three departments. Within these three departments, Simple Random Sampling (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 222) was done for the sample collection. This sampling method provides equal opportunity for each member of the population to become a part of the sample hence making it known as the most effective sampling procedure. In addition, Random selection method also allows the select the sample without bias and as such it can be considered to be the representative of the whole population. (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill 2009, 222)

3.2 Questionnaire
A survey questionnaire was used as a main tool to gather the data for this study. The questionnaire was separated into three sections; profile section, the survey proper with open ended questions and multiple-choice questions. The profile section contains 4 personal information related questions such as gender, age, marital status and the department of work. The first part of survey proper section part consists of 2 open-ended questions related to company incentives and the final part consisting 21 questions exploring the levels/factors of motivation.

The 21 questions of the survey proper part were structured in Likert format. In this survey five choices/scales were provided for every question. Each choice represents the degree of agreement each participant has on the given question. The scale used were strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree.

Likert survey type allows the respondents to answer the survey easily. This instrument also allows the quantitative research efficiently using of statistics for data interpretation.

To test the validity of the questionnaire of this study, the questionnaire was tested with five respondents first. These 5 respondents’ answers were not included in the actual study as these answers were used strictly for testing purposes. After the testing of the questionnaire the respondents were asked for suggestions or need for corrections to ensure further improvement and validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was later revised according to the suggestions given by the respondents. Irrelevant questions were taken away and difficult terminologies were changed into simpler version in order to ensure same understanding for all respondents.

3.3 Data Collection

The data was collected within 3 weeks period at IKEA, Espoo. During the data collection period, the respondents were asked to fill up questionnaire on the spot as it took only few minutes to answer the questions. This method was more effective than doing it by email or by post where responses rates could have been very low and also slow. This approach turned out to be very convenient in terms of getting a lot of responses in a short time and at low costs.

3.4 Reliability
According to Joppe (2000) replicability and repeatability of results or observations is the core of reliability. He defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under a study. Kirk and Miller (1986) states that three types of reliability in regards to quantitative research, that are; (1) the degree to which a measurement, given repeatedly, remains the same (2) the stability of a measurement over time; and (3) the similarity of measurements within a given time period (p, 41-42).

With Kirk and Miller’s type (1) concept of reliability, this study can be considered reliable as the outcomes of this study resembles with the literatures review on motivational theories and factors presented in this study. The results of this study also correspond with similar to the surveys that were conducted in IKEA in the past.

3.5 Validity

According to Joppe (2000), validity is to determine whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. He further states that researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others. Therefore, the core of validity can be understood as accurate answer of the question it was intended to answer.

In this regard, Fowler (2001, 76) stated that the questions have to be formulated in such a way that everyone understands it easily. If the respondents do not understand the questions, then the research is not valid.

In order to test the validity of the questionnaire of this study, the questionnaire was tested with five respondents first. These 5 respondents’ answers were not included in the actual study as these answers were used strictly for testing purposes. After the questionnaire were answered, the respondents asked for suggestions or any necessary corrections to ensure further improvement and validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was revised according to the suggestions given by the respondents. Irrelevant questions were taken away and vague or difficult terminologies were changed into simpler version in order to ensure same understanding for all respondents.
4.1 IKEA in Brief

IKEA, known for its well-designed, functional and sustainable home products at the lowest possible prices is a privately held home furnishing company established in the year 1943 by Ingvar Kamprad in Sweden. With a vision of creating a better everyday life for many people (i.e. employee, customers as well as the community), IKEA now has become the world’s largest furniture retailer and has branches in over 40 countries around the World. Company’s committed workforce and innovative concepts are known to be the main strength behind IKEA’s success.

In the year 2012, IKEA was chosen as the best employer in Finland (Talouselämä magazine, 3 February 2012). “Our co-workers are the strength of IKEA and we live by them” says Mikael Ohlson, the Chief Executive Officer of the IKEA group. IKEA strongly believes in diversity composition of workforce and it focuses on IKEA-culture, competence development and leadership development.

The human resources policy in IKEA is based on the idea of ‘giving down-to-earth, straight forward people, the possibility to grow, both as individuals and in their professional roles, so that together, employees are strongly committed to creating a better everyday life for themselves and the customers’. Meaning, IKEA understands the value of its employee and is always focuses on developing the strategy to create satisfied and committed workforce who in return contributes to the wellbeing and future success of the company.

4.2 Research Findings

In this chapter, the results and the analysis of the questionnaire will be presented in 2 parts and in the following order: Part 1 consists of background information of the respondents, how respondents define the concept and importance of ‘incentives’ and Part 2 consists of the factors affecting motivation at the workplace.

4.2.1 Part 1

This part consists of background information (genders, age, marital status and departments they work for) of the employees at IKEA Espoo
4.2.1.1 Genders

Out of 200 employees, 119 took part in this survey where 40.3% of the respondents were male and 59.7% female. This shows a relatively fair representation of each gender population.

![Figure 5: Respondents by Gender](image1)

4.2.1.2 Age

Figure 6 represents the age distribution of the respondents in the survey. The largest group of the respondents was aged 21-30 (52.9%), followed by those aged 31-40 (23.5%). Respondents aged from 40 and above made 15.1%, while the smallest were those aged below 20 who only represent 8.4% of the responses.

![Figure 6: Respondents by Age](image2)
4.2.1.3 Marital Status:

Figure 7 represents the marital status of the respondents in the survey. The data shows that more than two-third (74.8%) of the respondents are single while the other (25.2%) married.

![Bar chart showing marital status](image)

Figure 7: Respondents by Marital status

4.2.1.4 Work Department

Figure 8 introduces the respondents work department in the survey to the questionnaires conducted at Ikea Espoo. Sales (52.1%) represent the largest departments where respondents work in, followed by Customer service (26.9%). The rest of the respondents indicated their work department as Logistics (21.0%).
4.2.1.5 Incentives

The first research question inquires the concept of respondents towards incentives and how do they define them. It was an open-ended question in order to allow respondents the flexibleness to give an opinion on a subject freely. The top responses mentioned by the majority (65.5%) were money. Other responses to this question include job security (24.4%) and further development (10.1%).
As seen from above, the majority of the employees link the perception of incentives to monetary incentives.

In the next question, respondents were asked whether they think workplace incentives are essential to motivate them. More than two-third (90.8%) felt that incentives were either very important or important in motivating them. About (9.2%) specified somewhat unimportant. What we can assume here is incentives do have a limited motivating potential but not completely unimportant. As can be seen here, incentives do have the potential to drive motivation thus leading to the second research objective, that is, to find out the most important motivating factors that affects the willingness of employees to push more effort in their job.

4.2.2 Part 2

This part of the questionnaire ask the respondents to rank the potential motivators on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 meaning ‘Strongly Agree’ 2 ‘Agree’, 3 ‘Neutral’, 4 ‘Disagree’ and 5 ‘Strongly Disagree’. These questions are based on Lindner’s ten motivational factors.

4.2.2.1 Good place to work

With this statement, 74.8 % of the respondents strongly agree and 25.2 % agree that IKEA is good place to work. Nobody completely disagrees which is an indication that IKEA provides good working environment. Different age groups were examined using crosstabs in which none of them disagree with the statement. Above 40 year-olds are the most pleased ones with the working environment as 94.4 % of them strongly agree.

4.2.2.2 Encouraged to come up with better things

49.6 % of the respondents strongly agree and 42.9 % agree that employees are encouraged to come up with better ideas. Nobody completely disagree which shows that new ideas are encouraged. Different age groups were examined using cross tabs and age group below 20 have the most difficulties in coming up with better things, 80% being neutral and only 20% agreeing with the statement. Among other respondents, age group 21-30 year olds 55.6% strongly agree and 44.4% agree with the statement that they are encouraged to come up with better way to do things.
4.2.2.3 Salary meets responsibility

The answer for the statement “salary meets responsibility” shows that 41.2% of the respondents agree, 4.2% of them disagree and 21% of them neither agree nor disagree. This indicates that above 50% of the employees are not completely satisfied and feel that their salary not according to responsibilities they bear. The cross tabs shows that the male employees of 77.1% either agree or strongly agree and the female employees 73.2 % either agree or strongly agree which and indicates that male employees are bit more satisfied with their female counterparts.

4.2.2.4 Good salary is main motivator

When asked if good salary is the main motivator, 51.3 % of the respondents strongly agree, 31.9 % of them partially agree, only 4.2% of them partially disagree and 12.6 % of them neither agree nor disagree. This indicates that above 50% of the employees agree that good salary is the main motivator in a workplace. The cross tabs indicates that the male and female employees equally agree with the statement that good salary is the main motivator.

4.2.2.5 Innovative ideas are encouraged

A large amount of employees agree to the statement that “innovative ideas are encouraged”. A total of 56.3 % strongly agreed and 35.3 % partially agreed. No one completely disagreed and the cross tabulation between different work departments shows that the respondents who works in the logistics and customer service finds that innovative ideas are encouraged. The sales employees found that innovative ideas are least encouraged with 53% strongly agree, 30.6% partially agree and the rest 16.1% of them being neutral.

4.2.2.6 Satisfied with the recognition

Altogether 11.8% of the respondents strongly agree and 55.5 % of them agree that they are satisfied with the recognition they get for their accomplishments. A total of 30.3% respondents neither agree nor disagree and 2.5% of them disagreed with this statement which shows that not all the employees’ feels that they are totally satisfied with the recognition they get for their accomplishments. When genders
are examined using cross tabs, it can be seen that 75% of the male respondents and 62% of the female respondents either strongly agree or agree. Male respondents feel bit more satisfied with the recognition they get than the female respondents.

4.2.2.7 Job security motivates me

The employees at Ikea Espoo feel that their job is secure. A total of 49.6% of the respondents answered strongly agree and 24.4% answered agree with the statement. When marital status is compared, no significant differences can be found. However, a small amount of single employees with 74.3% either strongly agree or agree feels that job security motivates them compared to the married respondents with a total 70%.

4.2.2.8 Mistake made sometimes are accepted

A total of 71.4% of the respondents strongly agree and 21% agree with the statement that “mistakes made sometimes are accepted”. A total of 7.6% respondents neither agree nor disagree with the statement. When work departments are examined, it can be seen that, employees from logistics department feels more insecure about their mistakes with 21% followed by 26.9% from customer service. The sales employees feel a little more secure with making mistakes sometimes.

4.2.2.9 Diverse perspectives valued

When asked if “diverse perspectives are accepted”, a total of 45.4% of the respondents strongly agreed and 47.1% agreed. A total of 7.6% respondents neither agree nor disagree with diverse perspectives being valued. Different work departments were examined using cross tabs and it shows that employees from sales department (52.1%) feels more valued in terms of diverse perspectives compare to that of logistics employees with only 21% of the respondents agreeing with the statement.

4.2.2.10 Satisfied with the team spirit

With this statement, 44.5% of the respondents strongly agree and same amount of the respondents agree that they are satisfied with the team spirit at work. A total of 10.9% neither agree nor disagree with the statement. When examined gender using cross tabs, it shows that female respondents with 59.7% are little more satisfied with their team spirit compared to male respondents with 40.3%.
4.2.2.11 Opportunities for personal development

Many of the employees feel that there are opportunities for personal development in their jobs. A total of 54.6% of the respondents completely agreed and 39.5% partially agreed. When the differences in answers depending on age group are examined it can be seen that the age group of 21-30 years feel that there are opportunities for personal development. Those who are below 20 years old and above 40 years old feel that there are least chances of opportunities for personal development.

4.2.2.12 Feedback from supervisor

A total of 45.4% of the respondents strongly agree and 47.1% partially agree with the statement that feedback from the supervisor helps improves their performance. However, there is a slight dispersion in the answer because 2.1% disagree. When differences in gender were examined, it can be determined that more female respondents (59.7%) feel that their supervisor’s feedback can help improves performance compared to the male respondents of 40.3%.

4.2.2.13 Job performance is well evaluated

In this statement, 22.7% of the respondents completely agree and 52.1% agree. Only a few (6.7%) of the respondents disagree with the statement. Overall employees are satisfied with the evaluation of job performance at workplace. Different work departments were examined using cross tabs shows that employees of customer service department feel that they are not satisfied with the evaluation of their job performance.

4.2.2.14 Understands own contribution

In all 39.5% of the respondents completely agree and 26.9% agree that they can personally contribute to the company’s overall goals. Nobody completely disagreed with this statement and no significant differences can be found. The employees of sales department least feel that they can contribute to the company’s overall goals. Altogether 75% of the customer service employees either strongly agree or agree that they understand their contribution to the company’s overall goals.
4.2.2.15 Financial status informed

A total of 10.9% of the respondents totally agree and 37.8% agree that they are informed about company's financial status. A total of 51.3% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree which shows that employees feel that they are lacking information about the financial status of the company. The cross tabs indicate that when different departments were examined, customer service employees feel more informed about the company’s financial status with 18.8% strongly agreeing and 56.2% agreeing. The sales employees feel the least informed with 6.5% strongly agreeing and 29% of agreeing.

4.2.2.16 Authority to make decision

43.7% of the respondents completely agree and 26.1% of the respondents agree that they are given authority to make decisions at work. None other age group completely disagrees with the statement with only 1.6% of the 21-30 age groups disagree. When different age groups are cross-tabbed, it can be seen that age group from 21-30 years old have the feeling of having the authority to make own decisions at work. However, below 20 year olds feel more insecure about making own decisions at work with none of them strongly agreeing with the statement.

4.2.2.17 Supervisor understands the problem

Altogether, 27.7% of the respondents strongly agree and 42% agree that their supervisors understand the problem they face at work. Overall, employees are satisfied with their supervisor’s support regarding their problems. If the genders are compared, it can be seen that 70.4% of the female respondents and 68.8% of the male respondents either completely agree or agree that their supervisor understands their problem. The female respondents feel a little more supported by their supervisors than the male respondents.

4.2.2.18 Job description is clear

22.7% of the respondents strongly agree and 66.4% of the respondents agree that their job description is clear to them. Nobody disagree with the statement and only 10.9% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree about their job description being clear. Different work departments were cross-tabbed and it showed that logistics employees with 16% strongly agree and 84% agree.
Supervisor flexible towards family responsibility

Altogether, 28.6% of the respondents strongly agree and 34.5% of the respondents agree that their supervisor is flexible towards their family responsibility. A total of 34.5% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree and 2.5% of the respondents disagree with the statement. When marital-status was cross-tabbed, 64% of the single employees and 60% of the married employees either strongly agree or agree with their supervisor being flexible towards family responsibility. Unmarried respondents feel a little more supported by their supervisor towards family responsibility compared to married respondents.

Supervisor available for consultations

With this statement, 27.7% of the respondents strongly agree and 41.2% of the respondents agree, only 0.8% of them disagree and 30.3% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree. This indicates that over 50% of the respondents are satisfied with the supervisor being available for consultations. The cross tabs indicates that the male respondents of 68.8% and the female respondents of 69% either strongly agree or agree.

Skilled training provides confidence

Almost all the employees think that skilled training provides them confidence. Altogether 63% of the respondents strongly agree and 30.3% of the respondents partially agree. The cross tabulation indicate that the age group of 21-30 years old feel that the skilled trainings help increase their confidence with 98.4% of the respondents either strongly agree or agree. The age group below 20 years old feels this as less important issue with 50% of the respondents agreeing and 50% of the respondents neither agreeing nor disagreeing.
4.3 Summary of the Research Findings

Figure 10: Mean of the Research Findings

1 and below = strongly agree
2.50 = disagree

This figure shows that the majority of the respondents agree with most of the statements put forward in the questionnaire of this survey which were based on Lindner’s motivational factors. This figure therefore, shows that the employees are satisfied with most of the working conditions provided by the employer in order to motivate them. As the mean value of this chart is within the scale of 1-2, it can prove that the employees at IKEA, Espoo are motivated.
Figure 11: Ranking of motivating factors based on importance
1 and below = strongly important
2.50 = less important.

It can be seen in the Figure 11 that Interesting work is the paramount factor of motivation at IKEA Espoo with a low mean of 1.41, where none of the respondents had any extent of disagreement or took neutral stand. The response rate to this question was 100%. Following closely are good working conditions, promotions and growth in the company and job security with the mean of 1.55, 1.74 and 1.77 respectively. Surprisingly, good wages don’t seem to affect employee’s motivation as the factors mentioned above. Thus, is ranked among the five least motivating factors. Sympathetic help with personal problems is the least motivating factor considered by employees in IKEA with the mean of 2.08 followed by feeling of being in on things. Appreciation for job well done, tactful discipline and personal loyalty to employees are other factors employees think somehow motivate them.
Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to find out whether employees of IKEA, Espoo are motivated or not and also to determine the factors that motivate them at work. In addition, this study was also intended to find out what incentives meant for employees in IKEA, Espoo. The research questionnaire was based on Lindner’s ten motivational factors in order to measure and clarify what factors affect the most to employee’s motivation at IKEA, Espoo. All the responses gathered from the research were adequate to address all the objectives presented in this study.

In the theoretical part of this study several motivation theories, factors affecting work motivation and motivation techniques were discussed. Motivation can be either intrinsic or extrinsic, depending upon the employees themselves. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from inside an individual, which is driven by an interest or satisfaction in the work. Extrinsic motivation comes from expectations of external rewards such as money or gift certificates. However, both of these factors are equally important when it comes to work motivation.

Abraham Maslow has separated his ‘Hierarchy of needs’ into higher and lower order needs where physiological needs were described as lower order needs and self-actualization as higher order needs. In this study, money was the most frequently repeated response when employees were asked to conceptualized the meaning of incentive. This finding is unquestionable because it supports the Maslow’s Hierarchy of need theory that employees seek to satisfy the physiological needs before anything else, thus it is usually the first thing that would come to one’s mind. However, in the latter part of the study, it was discovered that money is not the best motivator as interesting work, good working conditions, promotion and growth in the company, and job security occupied the top five places in the chart.

The findings from this study show that employees prefer non-monetary incentives to monetary incentives. According to the employees, the top factors that motivate them are interesting work, good working conditions, promotions and growth in the company and job security. These factors represent the higher order needs in the Maslow’s hierarchy theory. This shows that employees at IKEA are intrinsically motivated. This also is aligned with McClelland’s and Mayo’s schools of thoughts.

In Lindner’s ranking of the motivation factors, good wages, occupies second position but in this study, good wages is in the fifth position. This indicates that although Lindner puts good wages as one of the most important factors of motivation,
for Ikea employees, other factors are more important than the good wages (see figure 11). Similarly, although few factors of motivation slightly defers from Lindners ranking, it can be claimed that the ranking of the factors of this study is in aligned with Lindners’ ranking.

Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that employees in IKEA, Espoo are highly motivated. Like previous researches, this study also suggests that money is not the important motivating factor, only beneficial under certain situations. However, some employees have expressed that they are not paid enough according to their job responsibilities. As such, some raise in salary would help increase their motivation level, even though money does not seem to be the most important factor of the work motivation.

Finally, the outcomes of the study are in accordance with the previous researches conducted in IKEA in general in Finland and also with various motivational theories presented in this study.

http://people.uncw.edu/caropresoe/500/500Fall07/Amabile-etal-WPI-article.pdf


http://www.studymode.com


http://www.alfiekohn.org/managing/fbrftb.htm


http://vlex.com/vid/extrinsic-intrinsic-organizational-77729310
Appendixes

Employee Motivation Survey

This survey is part of a bachelor’s thesis to be submitted to Laurea, University of Applied Sciences. The questionnaire has limited number of questions about ‘Working in IKEA’. It concerns your motivation factors and experiences with respect to ‘Working in IKEA’. All your answers will be treated confidentially! Completing the questionnaire will take no longer than 5 minutes.

Thank you!

...............................................................................................................................................................................................................

Personal Information

Please indicate the following with a cross (x) in the column provided.

1. Gender
   _____ Male                     _____ Female

2. Age (in years)
   _____ Below 20   _____ 21-30   _____ 31-40   _____ 40 and above

3. Marital status
   _____ Single      _____ Married

4. Work department
   _________________________________

5. What is the first word that comes to your mind when you think about ‘Incentive (kannuste)’?
   __________________________________________

6. How important are incentives (kannusteet) in influencing your willingness to exert more efforts in your job?
   __________________________________________
Please indicate to what extents do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IKEA is a good place to work.</td>
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<td>2. I am encouraged to come up with new and better way to do things.</td>
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<td>3. My salary is according to my responsibility.</td>
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<td>4. Good salary is the main motivator for me.</td>
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<td>5. Innovative ideas are encouraged.</td>
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<td>6. I am satisfied with the recognition I received for my accomplishment.</td>
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<td>7. Job security motivates me to higher performance.</td>
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<td>8. Mistakes made sometimes at work are accepted.</td>
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<td>9. Diverse perspectives are valued/personal views are accepted.</td>
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<td>10. I am satisfied with the team spirit in my department.</td>
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<td>11. There are opportunities for personal development.</td>
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<td>12. The feedback from the supervisor helps improves my performance.</td>
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<td>13. My job performance is well evaluated.</td>
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<td>14. I understand how my work performance contributes to the company’s overall goals.</td>
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<td>15. I am informed of the financial status of the company i.e. if company is making profit or loss.</td>
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<td>16. I have authority to make decisions necessary to accomplish assigned tasks.</td>
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<td>17. My supervisor understands the problem I face at work.</td>
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<td>18. My job description is clear to me.</td>
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<td>19. My supervisor is flexible towards my family responsibility.</td>
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<td>20. My supervisor is available for consultations.</td>
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<td>21. Skilled training provides me the confidence to put more effort to perform better in my job.</td>
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Other Suggestions
Thank you for your cooperation!