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Employee satisfaction and work motivation in Chinese small and medium sized enterprises

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ABSTRACT
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The purpose of the study was to study how to improve employees’ satisfaction and work motivation in Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, our task was to analyse in Chinese small and medium-sized private enterprises, find out how well motivation can help promote employee performance, what factors actually trigger high performance and help managers to manage their staffs effectively.

In the theory part of the study the main issue was to know more about the concepts of employee satisfaction and workmotivation. The data of questionnaires were collected by us, and we invited people working in the Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises to fill in questionnaires.

The results of the study show that managers should use both internal and external factors, focus on personnel performance and give useful feedback to employees. Better welfare, benefits or higher salary can have a positive influence in motivating employees, and it is necessary to concern the age and gender of employees.

Keywords: human resources management, Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises, employee satisfaction, work motivation
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Thesis

The management of people is an crucial part of the management process in China as well as in other countries. Managers are primarily responsible to ensure that tasks are done through employees in the right way. To achieve this, managers usually see an average worker as the root source of quality and productivity gains. Such organizations spend far more effort to develop employees, rather than use capital investments as the improvement of fundamental sources. A satisfied employee is more likely to be creative and innovative and come up with a breakthrough. To satisfy employees and to optimize their performance the various motivation methods are required, e.g.: salary, work environment, relationship, commitment, company policy and communication etc.

Employees have different motives. For instance, two people doing the same job may both succeed for different reasons, one person may be motivated by the commission earned on sales, while the other may be more focused on meeting sales targets. This creates challenges for managers designing appropriate motivation measures that will be able to reach the employees’ expects actions to promote their performance. Therefore, theory should be integrated with practice to tackle how motivation can enhance performance of employees.

1.2 Objectives of the Study and Research Problem

The aim of this thesis is to analyze in Chinese small and medium-sized private enterprises, how well motivation can help promote employee performance, what factors actually trigger high performance and help manager to manage their staff effectively. Based on analyzing the data we collected, the conclusion what the actual problems in Chinese small and medium-sized private organizations are will be presented.

Research problems:
Our main research question is how to improve employees' satisfaction and work motivation in Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises. The result is based on the data that we collected on the actual situations in small and medium-sized Chinese enterprises. Also, how managers can find some countermeasures to solve their problems is analysed in the thesis.

1.3 Methodology and methods

The questionnaire is included as the data collection tool for us to contact our targets, where as face-to-face communication was used when we asked about expectations of the employee, work environment, and job organization. The target group is people working in the Chinese small and medium-sized-owned private enterprises. There are no limitations either on age or gender. Furthermore, the questionnaire was delivered to the target group by email or via some other social channels such as Weibo and QQ. The minimum number of questionnaires should be at least 100. Because, the more information we collect, the more accurate analysis we will make.

Ask for the questionnaire design, there are two types of style questions. For instance, one is closed question such as "Are you satisfied with your salary at the moment? Respondents can choose different level of satisfaction, such as "very satisfied." For exploratory information, the open-ended questions will be more suitable like "How do you describe/judge your company?" Besides, we consider that there are increasingly foreign people working in China, so that we have two versions of questionnaires, the English version and the Chinese version. People can choose a version to upload, then fill it in. However, the questionnaire was designed based on our target.

1.4 The Structure of the Thesis

Our thesis can be divided into five parts. First of all, an introduction of the study can be found in the first chapter. Secondly, there are some theories that support our research topic, such as Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Herzberg’s two factor theories and the Theory X and Theory Y. Thirdly, reader can find some characteristics of Chinese business culture in employee satisfaction and work motivation. Meanwhile, some pros, problems and countermeasures, which exist
in some Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises, were analyzed. Moreover, two cases were provided for readers, and thus the reader can know more about work motivation and employee satisfaction in Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises. Fourthly, we have summarized, analyzed some useful data and provide some advice for managers. Finally, the chapter five is the conclusion of the thesis.

2 Nature of Human Resource Management

Human Resource has grown as an industry to include experts in the field of organizational development, change management, continuous process improvement, as well as those who gain impressive training and enjoy significant tenure in benefits administration, recruiting, policy analysis, and training (Bryon2005). Human resources develop work performance management systems. HRM usually encourages employees to work in the organization according to their potential and gives those advice and feedback that can help them to improve. Without human resources staff to build a plan that measures work performance, employees maybe do not have motivation to achieve their goals. This are bad news, for the productivity of the company, and also not suitable for the employees’ skills and expertise (Admin). Human resources managers are usually charged with the responsibility of determining the level of employee work satisfaction, they focus on employee satisfactions and try to keep them feel comfort. A high rate of satisfaction is directly related to a higher turnover rate. Thus, human resource managers carefully design employee surveys, focus groups and an exit interview strategy, human resources determines what underlies employee dissatisfaction and addresses those issues to motivate employees (Ruth).

2.1 Theories on Work Motivation

Motivation is defined by Mitchell as "the direction and persistence of action. It is concerned with why people choose a particular course of action in preference to others, and why they continue with a chosen action, often over a long period and in the face of difficulties and problems” (Mullins2007.). The direction and persistence of action here mean the employee’s attempt to achieve some goals
or objectives in order to fulfill some needs or expectations. According to each staff, companies make a suitable target and some rewards for them to motivate. Therefore, how to organize employees’ work well towards the goals of organization is a vital issue to be considered. However, we should take the long-term development of the company into consideration, not only taking care of the employees who are working in our company at the moment, but also those who will join our organization later.

In addition, another interesting definition of motivation is by Fombrum, Tichy and Devanna in 1984 “just as firm will be faced with inefficiencies when they try to implement new strategies with outmoded structures, so they will also face problems of implementation when they attempt to effect new strategies with inappropriate HR system. The critical management task is to align the formal structure and the HR systems (selection, appraisal, rewards and development) so that they can drive the strategic objectives of the organization” (Legge2005). It is true that when a company faces with risks, a clever manager should update their motivation system to motivate employees to help the company tide over difficulties, such as inspiring the needs of people, then encouraging them to achieve it. Moreover, the HR systems need to be taken into consider action by various aspects, which is the way to motivate people and work more effectively.

Employees have their personal needs, so that managers can do something to motivate them in a more effective and efficient way.

2.2 Early Theories of Motivation

Motivation is one of the most frequently researched topics in the human resource management. In the following sub-chapters, there are three early theories of motivation, which include Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Herzberg’s two factor theories and the Theory X and Theory Y.

Maslow’s hierarchy can be explained that different human needs have different level of satisfaction. Herzberg’s two factor theory revolves around the two basic factors associated with job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. McGregor’s Theory X assumes that workers have little ambition, dislike work, avoid
responsibility, and require close supervision, while the Theory Y assumes that workers can exercise self-direction, desire responsibility, and like to work. All in all, those theories and research are all with considerable insights into how to improve motivation in the organizations.

2.2.1 Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

![Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](image)

Maslow is a professional psychologist, who classified individual needs into five categories: physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualization needs. The base or lowest level is physiological needs. For example food, water, sleep, sensory pleasures, activity, maternal behavior. The second lowest level is security needs, which include safety, security and freedom in his/her family and in a society, and can be protection against violence. Meanwhile, people have needs for job security and savings, for instance of mental health, old age and disability. Following by love needs, which is in the middle level of Maslow’s hierarchy. It means people should have a sense of belonging, friendships and give love or can be loved. The second place goes to esteem needs, which is divided into two kind of esteem. It should be unique with self-respect and the
esteem of others. People need to be respected to evaluate themselves highly, which gives them a sense of achievement in their life. If people lack respect, it may case helplessness, inferiority and having no sense of presence. The highest level of Maslow’s need hierarchs is self-actualization needs. These needs are based on the satisfaction at the other four lower levels. They include needs to inspire and develop, then realize.

It is worth mentioning that only when a lower need is fulfilled, and it no longer motivates behavior, it is necessary to use the next higher one. In the meanwhile, higher-order needs provide greater motivation for employees. As a manager you should notice that different individuals may have different priorities.

### 2.2.2 Herzberg’s Two Factors Theory

In 1959, to understand employee motivation and job satisfaction better, Herzberg interviewed 203 accountants and engineers. They answered about their feeling exceptionally good or exceptionally bad in their present job or previous job. In his studies he came up with the conclusion that employees are influenced by two factors, i.e. “hygiene” and “motivators” factors. The hygiene factors are related to job environment and extrinsic to the job itself. Also Herzberg’s hygiene factors, create a suitable environment for employees and they serve to prevent dissatisfaction. For example job dissatisfaction can be caused by a low salary, which will affect the employee’s performance. At this time, Hygiene factors must make sure the environment of the workplace does not develop into disgruntle situation. Typical hygiene factors are salary, working condition, status, company policies and administration. The strength of motivators’ factors will affect feelings of satisfaction or no satisfaction, but not dissatisfaction. The opposite of dissatisfaction is not satisfaction but, simply, no dissatisfaction (Mullins 2007). In other words, motivators create job satisfactions and influence the ways of work in the company, which include achievement, recognition, autonomy and other intrinsic aspects. For instance giving responsibility to carry an enlarged task within an organization and providing the person with the necessary conditions will lead to growth and advancement to higher level tasks. Motivators are those factors which come from within an individual that is intrinsic (Saiyadain 2009).
2.2.3 Theory X and Theory Y

In the 1960s, social psychologist Douglas McGregor of MIT expounded two contrasting theories on human motivation and management: The theory X and theory Y. His work is based upon Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, and he grouped the hierarchy into lower-order needs (Theory X) and higher-order needs (Theory Y).

Theory X assumes employees are inherently lazy, dislike work and will avoid work if they can. According to this theory, employees will show little ambition in the work program and will avoid responsibility whenever they can. Because of these expressions, managers should supervise and implement comprehensive controls. Thus the theory X managers control their employees, and they believe that people work better under the observe action and, the work process is efficient. There is lack of delegation of authority, and control remains firmly centralized. Theory Y expounds a participative style of management that is decentralized. It assumes that employees are happy to work, are self-motivated and creative, and enjoy working with greater responsibility. According to the theory Y people learn not only to accept but also to seek responsibility. Thus, a theory Y manager believes that if they give the right needs and conditions, most people would like to do their work well (James2014).

In a word, theory X managers are less likely than theory Y managers to build the trust with employees. It is a crucial aspect to develop employees in any organizations. Trust can help set an open, harmonious and comfortable environment between managers and employees. This environment could affect whether employees would like to share their ideas and thoughts or not.

2.3 Contemporary Theories of Motivation

The previously described theories are quite well known in the business area, but as the times progress, it is necessary to follow the new times. There are a number of contemporary theories developing recently. They are called contemporary theories, which represent the current state of thinking in explaining employee job motivation.
2.3.1 Cognitive Evaluation Theory

The concept of cognitive evaluation says that intrinsically motivated behavior is affected by a person's innate need to feel competent and self-determining in dealing with the environment. The theory asserts that there are two main ways extrinsic rewards affect intrinsic motivation (The Oxford Dictionary). For example, you are a luxury product salesman, and you are interested in your job so that it can attribute your good performance to an intrinsic motivation. While, if your sales manager wants to increase the total sales revenue, she/he decides to link your salary to the number of luxury products you sell. In other words, the more products you sell, the more salary you get. Through this extrinsic motivation, employees will become more motivated to do their work because of their higher salary. At this time, you are motivated by how much you can be paid rather than the work itself.

To be more specific, the extrinsic rewards can be divided into two types: verbal and tangible. Verbal rewards such as appreciation, encouragement and praise from others actually increase the intrinsic motivation. Tangible rewards such as money, demotion and compensation are also used by managers to motivate their employees to have good performances. Thus, it is obvious that both intrinsic and extrinsic incentives have significant impacts on individual performance. Meanwhile, it depends on the different situations.

2.3.2 Goal-Setting Theory

In the 1960s, Professor Edwin A. Locke identified a link between goal-setting and employee performance. After that, goal-setting and task motivation have become an integral part of the employee performance management. Locke found that employees are productive when motivated by clear goals and appropriate feedback (Chinn). For instance, when the semester nearly ends, your goal is to achieve a high grade in the final exam. Once the goal is set up, it tells you that you should study hard and spare no effort to achieve it. Even though you are not interested in studying or there is no extrinsic ward for you, your goal will help you and push you forward. So setting a reasonable and suitable goal is quite important for employees.
There are five steps that help people to build a goal and help them to achieve it:

Step one: identify the needs for or purpose of the goal. According to the goal, employees should learn more skills for increasing the productivity. Meanwhile, the need of the goal should be objective and documented.

Step two: managers should meet with employee to discuss the need for goal-setting. Having discussion with employees and asking their problems about their goals, at the same time, managers should help and encourage them.

Step three: through SMART model (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based) to develop an action plan. It is necessary to set a reasonable goal by employees so that the goal is challenging and achievable. Achievable goals can bring a sense of fulfillment to increase employees’ job satisfactions.

Step four: ensure that the employee has enough equipment, supplies and time she/he needs to achieve the goal. Good managers should meet with their employees regularly to monitor employees’ progress, answer questions, and give guidance, coaching and support.

Step five: meet with the employees at the end of the specified time frame to review the action plan and report on results. If employees achieve their goals, managers must recognize their achievements and also give their rewards. However, if employees have failed, managers must have discussion with them, and employees must be disciplined. (Chinn)

In general, Edwin A. Locke suggested that managers should help their employees to build reasonable goals. And during the implementation period, it is necessary to give useful feedback to employees to achieve goals.

2.3.3 Self-Efficacy Theory

Albert Bandura (1994) described self-efficacy: “the belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations”. In other words, self-efficacy is a person’s belief in his/her ability to succeed in a particular situation. Also Bandura illustrated these beliefs as determinants of how people think, behave, and feel (Kendra). People with high
self-efficacy will be higher motivated no matter what happened, they can still make the task done, even though they know about it in the last minute. However, people who have lower self-efficacy will be less motivated or even give up when they encounter any problems, difficulties or negative feedback. Because they do not believe that they can do it smoothly, they rather think that they have only capability that cannot handle it. Thus, how to improve individual’s confidence for completing a task successfully is a challenge to managers.

Bandura also provided four sources that affect the individual self-efficacy:

1. Mastery Experience: the most effective way of developing a strong sense of efficacy is through master experiences. Performing a task successfully can strengthen people’s sense of self-efficacy. On the contrary, if tasks failed, it can undermine and weaken self-efficacy.

2. Social Persuasion: Persuasion is a useful skill, which can give something positive to people and help them achieve a goal. Verbal encouragement from others can also help people overcome difficulties and will spare no effort to achieve their goals.

3. Social Modeling: Witnessing successful people complete a task and simulating them to sustain motivation and beliefs is also an important source of self-efficacy.

4. Psychological Responses: Personal responses and emotional reactions to situations play an essential role in self-efficacy. In other words, moods, emotional state, physical reaction, and stress levels can impact person’s feeling about personal abilities in a particular situation. If people have a high level of ability to control their nervous before speaking in public, it can help them present well and attract audiences’ attentions. (Kendra)

2.3.4 Equity Theory

Comparison is common in our daily life in anywhere and anytime. We can be compared by others and also we would like to compare with others. We can compare our education level, property, salary, etc. In the organizations,
employees often compare their job inputs with the input of others. Meanwhile, they often compare their colleagues’ input-outcome ratio and their own input-outcome ratio. If their input is equal to what they get, they will feel treated fair. However, when their input is not equal what they get, it means their ratio is unequal. Then, employees may produce less or poor quality products to show how dissatisfied they are.

It is necessary to understanding the concept of equity, It helps managers to appreciate that understand improving employees terms and conditions can tackle their demands. The equity theory always reminds managers that when employees choose work, they will focus on the surrounding environment, team, and system of company. Thus, we can see that the Equity theory is quite important, and manager should handle it correctly. There are five implications of the equity theory for managers:

1. Employees consider the totals of their inputs and outcomes. That is to say, a job with lower monetary compensation can be accepted in return for flexible working hours.

2. Different employees ascribe personal values to inputs and outcomes. For instance, two people have the same experience and qualification performing in the same work for the same payment, they may have different perceptions of the fairness of the deal.

3. Purchasing power and local market conditions can be adjusted by employees. In other words, a salesman from Alberta may accept lower compensation, while, his co-worker from New York may not be able to accept this compensation, because their living costs are totally different.

4. Managers should help employees to correct deviation about employees’ perceptions of inputs and outcomes of themselves and others.

5. Do not over-compensate to employees. Because they may adjust the values of themselves to their inputs. They may have a sense of superiority and actually decline their efforts.
In a word, companies need to make effort to guarantee their justice. In the meanwhile, companies need to prove their procedural justice, the process must be fair and used to determine employees’ outcome, which is applicable. Besides, a good manager, who should always respect employees and treat everyone in the same way.(Adams)

2.3.5 Expectancy Theory

Vroom’s expectancy theory is different from the Maslow, Herzberg and McClelland theories. Vroom’s expectancy theory provided a cognitive process, which reflects individuals who have different performances in work motivation.

The theory is based on the following three factors:

Valence is the first factor that affects people’s expectancy. It is about the emotional orientations people hold with respect to outcomes (rewards). Extrinsic rewards (money, promotion, time-off, benefits) or intrinsic rewards (satisfactions) are all employees want. Meanwhile, managers must discover what employees value so that they can give reasonable rewards to their employees.

The second factor is expectancy. Different employees have different expectations and confidence levels about what they can do. So managers must know what resources, training, or supervision employees need, which can help employees to improve and easily achieve goals.

Instrumentality is the third factor. Employees’ perception as to whether they will get what they desire when it has been promised by a manager. When employees achieve goals, managers must fulfill their promises. It will an extrinsic incentive to push employees’ to work. Meanwhile, it can create a motivational force such that employees acts in ways that bring pleasure and avoid pain.(Vroom, V.H., Deci, E.I., Penguin 1983)

In conclusion, organizational employees’ performance appraisal system must be fair and unbiased. Managers must be able to notice and recognize their staffs’ efforts and give them compensation in time.
2.4 Employee Job Satisfaction Management

Over years, employee job satisfaction has been a key factor to the success of any business. It affects work performance through different ways, which can mean different things to different people. Employee job satisfaction is more of an attitude, an internal state. It could, for example, be associated with a personal feeling of achievement, either quantitative or qualitative (Mullins 2007, PP.253-254). A person with high job satisfaction appears to hold generally positive attitudes, and one who is dissatisfied to hold negative attitudes towards their job (Robbins 1993, PP.133-157).

Spector (1997, PP.5-10) explains that for researchers to understand these attitudes, they need to understand the complex and interrelated facets of job satisfaction. A facet of job satisfaction can be described as any part of a job that produces feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. There are numerous reasons why employees’ job satisfaction should be concerned by the company. First of all, the humanitarian perspective is that people deserve to be treated fairly and with respect. If employees have good treatments, their job satisfaction will be high. Secondly, the utilitarian perspective means job satisfaction can lead to the behavior by employees that effects organizational functioning. Moreover, organizational functioning can reflect the employee job satisfaction (Spector 1997. PP.5-10). In the other hand, there are several reasons why employees feel discouraged about their jobs or resign. They include lack of communication in the company, lack of recognition, limited opportunities for growth and promotion, or high pressures. Each reason to justify concern with job satisfaction is sufficient. Managers in many organizations share the concern of researches for the job satisfaction.

2.4.1 Job Design

Job design is a crucial part in business management and has been well known in the private sector for over 30 years. According to research, employees are motivated by jobs in which they feel they can make a difference and jobs can be designed with that in mind. The main purpose of job design is to increase employee job satisfaction and the sales revenue of the company. For instance,
job design is to improve the employees’ motivation and productivity, so that it can increase quality and quantity of goods and services, and reduce optional costs or training costs.

There are five methods of job designs that typically contribute to the employee’s enjoyment of their jobs. First, the scope of the job should be proper. If the scope is too narrow, then the job will not be challenging, which is bad for people to get an opportunity for development. While, if the scope of the job is very wide, the manager will not be able to handle it correctly. It will cause pressures and loss of control. So the scope of the job must be balanced in a correct area. The second, people have different likes and dislikes. Some people work efficiently when they work alone, while some people prefer to work in groups, rather than work alone, because they like discussions with others. When managers start to plan and design jobs, they should consider individual likes and dislikes (Akrani, 2011). Rotation jobs, the third method, allows employees to work in different organization departments or jobs. This method can provide more opportunities for people to learn different skills and acquire different experiences. The fourth method is job enrichment, managers provide more stimulating and interesting work to employees that will add variety and challenge to an employee’s daily routine. It is beneficial for people to have a good control in their work and make they work more efficient. Lastly, increasing employee direct feedback, makes people know how well, or poorly, they are performing their jobs. The more feedback managers can give employees for evaluating and monitoring their performances, the more valuable results will be. When people receive feedback, and they will learn to tackle problems to solve improving them and get a better result (James). Job designs serve to help communication, performance, motivation, productivity and innovation. They also help to create an environment where employees can work effectively.

2.4.2 Work Environment

An increasingly important factor affecting employee job satisfaction is the work environment and workplace facilities. People comfortable within their working environment will work more effectively and will quite enjoy the working process. Thus, managers should take into account the work environment carefully. There
are several issues that managers should take into consideration. The first issue is noise, if there appears noise in the workplace, it can cause irreversible hearing damage, increase the levels of pressures and interrupt employee meditations. It is normally caused by machines or vehicles, so the noise emission levels should be checked when buying new machinery. The remedies are providing people with hearing protection or building green areas for declining the noises.

The second issue that must be considered in the workplace is ventilation. Air quality should be considered in the first place. The workplace should be adequately ventilated, so that clean and fresh air can be drawn from outside of the workplace. Inside buildings should have natural, mechanical ventilations or air conditioning. These systems should provide a comfortable environment for employees. The temperature is the third issue, it also be controlled in the workplace. Employees should work under reasonable temperatures, in other words, the temperature makes employees feel comfort when they are working. The optimum comfort for sedentary work is between 20 and 26 degrees Celsius, depending on the time of the year and clothing worn. The fourth issue is sufficient lighting, which must be provided, whether it is from a natural or artificial source. It is quite important for protecting employees’ eyesight and without having to adopt awkward postures when employees perform their jobs. All lights should be kept clean and ideally, and different lighting levels may be needed for different times of the day. (Safe work Australia)

The last issue is stress, which is increasingly becoming an important issue in the workplace. It can be caused by various factors, such as the payment of the work, job security, bullying, and the relationship with colleagues, the place of working, the repetition and monotony work and so on. Different people will react differently when they face stress. In order to help employees to release their pressures and burdens, it is necessary to organize group activities to provide more chances to communicate with each other, and through participating in physical activities to discharge their pressures. Setting a comfortable working environment is a wise choice for keeping employees morale, motivation and productivity at the high level.
3 The Background of Chinese Business Culture in Employee Satisfaction and Work Motivation

Building a strong and successful organization in any country depends on recurring, training, and retaining the best employees. In China, there are huge human resource management markets and will probably remain so for long time. In other words, China offers tens of thousands of job, meanwhile, organizations should choose their new staffs correctly. In this chapter, we through analysis characteristics, advantages, problems and countermeasures to know more what kinds of employee satisfaction and work motivation phenomenon in Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises.

3.1 The Characteristics of Chinese Business Culture in Contemporary

Prior to China’s market reforms, the government’s policies regarding matters such as centralized labor allocation rendered most traditional HR-type decision-making largely moot. With the newly competitive environment, HRM practices in China advanced rapidly, covering in 1994-2004 much, but not all, of the ground it took HR in America close to 100 years to traverse. As China’s market reforms continue, HRM will help to power the nation’s companies into achieving further world-class competitiveness.

In China, the period between 1949 and 1994 was largely devoid of enterprise-level human resource management decision-making, at least in the sense that most of us understand the term today. With the establishment of China’s central planning system, a unified labor allocation system determined who worked where and the number and nature of workerseach enterprise was to hire. (Asia Africa Intelligence Wire. 2002) A fixed national wage scale largely obliterated wage differentials, both within and between job classifications.

For HRM, it was the era of the three “iron” practices—the iron (or fixed) rice bowl, iron position, and iron wage system. The iron rice bowl gave workers lifetime employment; their iron position meant managers kept their jobs regardless of performance; and the iron wage system meant that enterprise managers had no control over wages and benefits, so that productive
workers received the same pay as those who worked less hard. (Asia Africa Intelligence Wire. 2004a) Workers became either laborers or cadres (managers) based largely on education, and most retained their status throughout their working lives.

Chinese traditional culture gave birth to a large power distance culture of Chinese-style entrepreneurs, leaders showed too prominent role in many local small and medium enterprises, thus accrued a number of question, such as “tyrant” decision model, mobility low and cultural fault and so on. To develop advanced culture of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs should improve their own quality.

In 1980, by investigating 117,000 IBM employees in 66 countries, Hofstede based on their value of work, chose four important dimensions to discuss the impact of culture on the organization. They are: individualism and collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculine and feminine. The following will focus on China’s “entrepreneurial culture” from the power distance dimension.

PDI, Power Distance Index measures the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above. It suggests that a society’s level of inequality is endorsed by the followers as much as by the leaders.

Although, with China’s reform and opening and the deepening of political democratization process, power distance have a narrowing trend in some aspects, but a nation’s culture is the result of a long accumulation. Therefore, a large power distance is still exist in China’s current political and social life. An obvious characteristic in the performance of commercial activities is the entrepreneurial culture in Chinese local enterprises.

3.1.1 Guanxi

Guanxi describes the basic dynamic in personalized networks of influence, and is a central idea in Chinese society. In Western media, the pinyin romanization
of this Chinese word is becoming more widely used instead of the two common translations—"connections" and "relationships"—as neither of those terms sufficiently reflects the wide cultural implications that guanxidescribes. (2002. Social Connections in China)

Closely related concepts include that of ganqing, a measure which reflects the depth of feeling within an interpersonal relationship, renqing (人情 rénqíng), the moral obligation to maintain the relationship, and the idea of "face" (面子, miànzi), meaning social status, propriety, prestige, or more realistically a combination of all three.

Guanxi has a major influence on the management of businesses based in China, and also those owned by overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, known as the bamboo network. (2007. Handbook of Research on Asian Business)

At its most basic, guanxi describes a personal connection between two people in which one is able to prevail upon another to perform a favor or service, or be prevailed upon. The two people need not be of equal social status. Guanxi can also be used to describe a network of contacts, which an individual can call upon when something needs to be done, and through which he or she can exert influence on behalf of another. In addition, guanxi can describe a state of general understanding between two people: "he/she is aware of my wants/needs and will take them into account when deciding her/his course of future actions which concern or could concern me without any specific discussion or request".

Guanxi refers to the benefits gained from social connections and usually extends from extended family, school friends, workmates and members of common clubs or organizations. It is custom for Chinese people to cultivate an intricate web of guanxi relationships, which may expand in a huge number of directions, and includes lifelong relationships. Staying in contact with members of your network is not necessary to bind reciprocal obligations. Reciprocal favors are the key factor to maintaining one’s guanxi web, failure to reciprocate is considered an unforgivable offense. (Gwen Penner, It’s all Chinese to Me, 2009) The more you ask of someone the more you owe them. Guanxi can perpetuate a never ending cycle of favors.
Some economists have warned that Western countries and others that trade regularly with China should improve their "cultural competency" in regards to practices such as guanxi, to avoid financial fallout due to lack of cultural awareness.

When a guanxi network violates bureaucratic norms, it can lead to corruption, and guanxi can also form the basis of patron–client relations. (Luo, Yadong 2008, The changing Chinese culture and business behavior)

In East Asian societies the boundary between business and social lives can sometimes be ambiguous as people tend to rely heavily on their closer relations and friends. This can result in nepotism in the work force, as it is common for authoritative figures to draw from family and close ties to fill employment opportunities; instead of assessing talent and suitability such as is the norm in Western societies. (Steven X. Si 2010, Can guanxi be a problem?) This practice often prevents the most suitably qualified person being employed for the position.

3.1.2 Elements of Chinese Business Etiquette

A common mistake business people make before going overseas is not making an effort to understand the basics, such as how to make a positive first impression. These first impressions are based on etiquette and greeting rituals that vary for different countries. The business etiquette associated with the wai in Thailand, the bow in Korea and Japan, and the handshake in the West when done properly create a good first impression. When done wrong, one potentially botches the relationship in the first 30 to 60 seconds.

Unfortunately, creating a positive first impression is not enough. One should also have an understanding of the following aspects of Chinese business etiquette:

- Gift giving
- Greeting rituals
- Business relationship development
• When to display emotions
• Time perceptions
• Differences in decision making and problem solving
• Guest-Host relations
• Negotiation styles
• How to use intermediaries
• Meeting customs and conduct
• Use of the names, titles and business card presentation
• How to establish relationships with government officials

3.2 Advantages of employees satisfaction and work motivation

Although China's natural resources' per capita share were lower than the world average, such as arable land, forest, mining, oil, etc. But the human resources are very rich. China is the world's most populous country, there are currently 1.3 billion people. Human resources total about 700 million, accounting for over 30% of the total number of the world's human resources.

Chinese government’s direction on the development of human resources has been a clear and through central and local governments and enterprises, institutions, etc., with education and training and other methods to make the quality of China’s human resources have been greatly improved.

October 1998, British Prime Minister Tony Blair's visit to China, said: China's Human Resources has two characteristics: Rich and Poor. I understand what he said “rich” is the wealth of China’s rich human resources, and “poor” refers to the quality of our human resources is not high.
3.3 Problems of Employee Motivation System

These problems are based on our data analysis in the fifth chapter, the extra information and problem are related to this topic. These problems can be summarized in the following subchapter, i.e. autocratic management, unclear or ineffective standards, payment system, and performance evaluation system.

3.3.1 The Autocratic Management Style

In 2011, there were two discrete stories of China—one story about corruption and the second story about a social protest. They constitute significant threats to autocratic management style in Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises.

When businessmen create their own companies, they must engage people who they trust in and who can share the unknown risks together with them. It leads to the fact that owners prefer to choose their own family members or closer friends. As in the employees hired from the public, they do not trust. They treat their staffs like outsiders just as people who can help their own business to do some chores. Thus, outsiders have to follow the orders from managers, and the managers also do not depend on them to make some changes for organizations. It is hard to create the sense of belonging and identity to employees when they face such autocratic management style.

3.3.2 Unclear or Ineffective Standards

Organizations should set the effectiveness of motivation system to reduce the percentage of the unclear or ineffective standards. It determines whether an employee is qualified to acquire a reward and what kind of reward the employee can acquire.

In some small and medium-sized Chinese enterprises, the goals of employees are high, which is unreasonable. It leads to the situation in which small number of employees can successfully accomplish their goals. If their do not achieve their goals, they can be punished by their managers. The punishment is linked to salary. We believe that not many employees are willing to invest their time to conquer an unreasonable target. Therefore, it makes sense that motivation is weak.
3.3.3 The Problems of the Payment System

Until now, there are still three types of problems in the payment system of Chinese small and medium-sized enterprises. Firstly, there are some small and medium-sized Chinese enterprises that do not adjust payment levels according to the policy of government. Because of the imperfect government regulatory system some organizations have a chance to do that. Secondly, the payment determinations of some organizations are arbitrary and subjective. That is to say, employees’ salary is based on either the relationship with the managers or the preference of the managers. This factor makes employees get unequal treatment, which raises the job dissatisfaction and reduces production efficiency. Thirdly, there are still some small and medium-sized enterprises that do not pay for employees on time. Even though the fact that payment should be delivered on time can be found in the contract, managers also provide different kinds of excuses to employees to arrear with the payment of employees.

3.3.4 The Problems of Performance Evaluation System

The ineffective performance evaluation system can be caused by unclear standard. Usually, in small and medium-sized Chinese enterprises, managers evaluate their employees’ performance by three factors: work performance quality, work quantity and integrity quantity. Actually, these factors are hard to define what is good performance. Thus, without clear performance standards for managers and employees, this will lead to an ineffective evaluation. After that, many managers will get a general impression on specific situations, which are totally affecting their judgment. For instance, one day employee A had conflicts with their group members. At this time, managers judge that employee A is an unfriendly people. Rather than managers will consider that whether employee A is suitable for group working and whether employee A gets along with others. Another example is that Mr. B is a senior employee with a high productivity. But employee B always has conflicts with other co-workers, meanwhile, managers also trend to concern the productive of Mr.B, rather than focus on whether employee B is unfriendly people and whether Mr.B will impact others productivity.
3.4 Countermeasures

3.4.1 Create an Organizational Culture

Organizational culture can guide employees’ decisions and actions at the unconscious level, which is made up with people’s shared values, beliefs, symbols, and behaviors. Thus, organizational culture can affect a company’s well-being and success.

Organizational culture creates a common ground for employees. It can help to reduce uncertainty by offering a language for interpreting events and issues. It contributes to the sense of belonging and unity. Furthermore, organizational culture stimulates responsibility, e.g. spreading the organizational missions and goals. It is good for that all employees can aim at the same direction and give benefits to company development. Thirdly, organizational culture can create a sense of honor, such as building mutual trust and interdependent relationships between employees and organizations, so that employees can treat the company as their own and do their best for the company.

3.4.2 Build an Effective Communication Channel

Within an organization, information flows are defined as communication. Through communication channels, the goals, rules and policies of companies can be delivered to each department and every employee. An effective communication channel can share the company’s information with employees in time, meanwhile, it gives a sense of respect to employees.

Nowadays, there are various communication channels available to managers. However, it is difficult to choose the easiest, fastest and more suitable communication channel by managers in different situations. It is necessary to analyse of organizational communication channels, which can be divided into three main groups: formal, informal and unofficial.

- Formal communication channels transmits information like the organizational goals, policies and procedures. A message is a command chain in formal communication channels. It means information flows from
Informal communication channels refer to the communication channels that distribute information in an unorganized way, e.g. people meet in the cafeteria and discussion their work with a relaxed atmosphere.

Unofficial communication channels refer to the communication talk about gossip and rumors within an organization. In other words, it is social gatherings among employees.

Three main communication channels that are essential for managers to get his/her ideas across and then listen, absorb, glean and further communicate information. (Communication Channels)

### 3.4.3 Establish an Equitable Payment System

Firstly, it is necessary to follow the industry payment standards, which reflect the job value and respect the employees’ contributions.

Secondly, in order to build an equitable payment system, job evaluation is indispensable. Job evaluation is a systematic process to establish the ‘size’ of a job relative to others. If a company determines the relative value of a job, the basic principle of job evaluation should be tackled. Moreover, job evaluation can also address some aspects of job evaluation that have been found to give rise to gender bias. After job evaluation has been done, a wage curve should be used. It means that the managers should classify jobs: how much the pay to each personal work should be and how they should categorize each job. So that it is easy to build an equitable payment and avoid unfair payment.

Thirdly, companies must set a high efficiency regulatory system to enhance the equity of the payment system. They should deliver payment on time and follow the payment level of the government policy. Besides, government must effectively improve the quality of the national regulatory system as well to monitor each company.
3.4.4 Build Good Performance Appraisal System

A performance evaluation system is a formal structure by which the manager reviews an employee’s performance, job description, expectations and goals. In order to build a good performance evaluation system, certain items must be taken into consideration, firstly, a good performance evaluation system is fair. Managers should give a clear guidance on how to score each performance of the employee, so that the employee can easily understand and obey the rules. Secondly, evaluation systems should be consistent. In other words, each employee in a different department must get the same basic evaluation criteria. In the meanwhile, they should be evaluated among the same time, e.g. once a quarter or twice a year. (Kokemuller) Thirdly, companies should use the right appraisal tools, like the methods of graphic rating scale forced distribution and critical incidents. According to pros and cons, the best suitable tools for evaluating employees’ performance can be found.

A good evaluation system is a useful way to help employees to learn skills, that are they should learn.

3.5 Case study

In this chapter the data collected for this study through official websites in addition to data obtained through documentation is presented in the form of case studies. In each of the case studies we will start by analyze the employee motivation and factors can be influenced, then move to the research question, conclude how these case companies achieve the improvement of work motivation.
3.5.1 Case one KenGee Bakery

Figure 2, KenGee Logo
(http://www.nipic.com/show/3/82/4407616k8126e91c.html)

Company background

“KenGee” brand was founded in 2000 New Year's Day, formerly known as Xiangfan KenGee supermarket chain Ltd. KenGee Bakery has taken a mode of production of central site processing factory combined baking in stores, to provide customers with quality service by the company’s direct selling stores. KenGee operates mainly in baked food, bread, cakes, cookies, moon cakes and so on. The chairman of the company is Mr. Lu Wei.

When KenGee began their factory the bread became very popular and the founders wanted to expand to other provinces of China, but in order to do so they had to preserve the bread and distribute it fresh, the only way to do this was by freezing the bread. KenGee’s business idea is to offer their customer healthy good with the design full of fashion sense.

The biggest and most important market is Wuhan city where KenGee stands for 21% of the bakery market. In recent years expand more markets in addition Wuhan city. The expansion will keep growing, since KenGee is discovered all over China and more people strive for their bread.

3.5.1.1 Employee motivation at KenGee

Motivation factors managers can use
Over the years KenGee has recognized that there exist many different motivational factors among their employees, as well as managers. For Lu Wei (chairman of the company) “people are the focus”, both personnel and customers participate in making KenGee profitable. Since the company has to rely on shift work they know that the work performed makes tributes on the employees and their motivation. The employees work on the same schedule for one week and then they switch shifts, this include working from Sunday night to Friday night depending on the shifts. KenGee have recognized some very common motivational factors such as wage, working hours and benefits. The motivational factors for companies with shift work are primary external, but in KenGee’s case affiliation is the major one concerning motivation.

The wage of the workers is controlled by collective agreements, but KenGee has chosen to pay a wage that is ten percentages higher than the collective agreement as a way to motivate their employees since they know that the work is very demanding. Attempts have been made to improve the shift hours and the company welcomes ideas from employees in order to make improvement of work hours. One of the benefits KenGee offers their employees is to use the company’s own gym that lies besides the factory whenever they want. KenGee wants to engage their employee in health activities, but it is a small number that participate in these activities. KenGee has recognized that good wages and working schedules are two important motivational factors and the company wants to work with their employees and is very open to suggestions from co-workers for improving matters and the company would like the employees to be able to influence their own working environment.

Not all young people entering the work force want to have challenges, but it is very easy to judge the entire group as a unity. Managers at KenGee makes attempt to talk and recognize people who want to work in projects and improve work place. Empowering personnel is seen as a motivation factor and KenGee wants the people working in the factory with production to be able to make their voice heard to develop the working environment, with development meaning both work environment as well as technology. The psychological work environment is considered to be good at KenGee, which includes friends, coffee
breaks, parties, gifts, the company even have different scales of apartments which employees can rent for a very low price, but the demand is very high in Wuhan, where KenGee’s headquarters located. The physical environment still needs improvements. Dust is a big problem when doing bakery and this aspect at work has increased, the workers has to improve their own working environment since they are considered to be specialist when knowing what to improve.

Having fun at work is also very important, but the fun part also has to be able to shift rather quickly to seriousness. Leaders are there to support the fun “activities” that already exist at work and make them even more stable and KenGee has improved well in this area, but in the end it is all up to the individual, each individual is different, but having respected for others as well as for general human values is an important factor. It is important to be respected, respect others and an individual that can show consideration, be present and be confident in one self can be generous with others. When recruiting personnel KenGee looks for managers with the above characteristics. If a leader has self awareness as well as formal knowledge it might be a good leader for the company.

Managers are very important for motivation, managers are there to help the “weaker” and the goal is to work together with personnel to solve problems. Sometimes the company has recognized that a leader is not suited for a position and moved them to another area, KenGee does not only need leaders they also need specialists. Good leadership work in strengthening the motivation and in KenGee case the owner picture is important among employees. They believe that respecting one another is important and they work as a family at the company.

KenGee wants their employees to feel like they can advance within the company, but it is rather hard to advance since the company is a medium sized company and cannot be compared with larger and more international companies. When possible KenGee attempts to recuit internally and the workers should know that advancement can be a motivational factor.
The policy of KenGee is that all employees should have a family life. Managers have to assume that individuals are not locked into certain roles in society and it is up to the individuals to inform the managers of his or her special case. Therefore at KenGee the relationship with managers and employees is very important.

DISC-model

The company has noticed that motivation is very individual and that some employees motivate others, it is clear that respect can take a person far, have respect and love others and strive for success. Employees that can motivate others are steady, both in themselves and in the way they handle the environment and the company has to look in the future for managers and employees with these characteristics.

Incentive profile

On 12 month intervals KenGee conducts a survey, in order to measure different factors of motivation and if employees feel satisfied at work or not. The survey has shown that feeling good at work and with co-workers is a more important motivational factor than money. KenGee spirit, is about the employees feeling proud in their profession, engagement and enthusiasm, and responsibility follows with these three factors.

The survey demonstrates that safe employment and the feeling at work are high motivational factors and the view of KenGee is that high quality, ethic and moral, equality and co-workers are important. The work environment dominated in the survey and having a good feeling when going to work was of equal importance compared to wage. Wellbeing at work and relationship with employees and co-workers was also rather high on the list of motivational factors. The survey is performed in order to lift out the parts that need improvement and a special group is working with these factors. KenGee believes that a year is a suitable time to make changes that are noticeable for the company.

In the past, working for a food company was safe and the companies had loyal customers and employees. Today with the good prospects for the bakery
industry, some other brands are bringing plagiarism of the kind of bread KenGee produces to their shelves. It is no longer safe as it was in the past to work for food companies and the feeling of safety have changed both at work and in society. There no longer exist a term as full-time employment and more pressure is put on manages to mediate a feeling of safety as well as acting as a filter barrier and communicate with employees.

Leadership

KenGee discusses an invisible leadership where leaders communicate with their employees, and perform tasks together. Something positive for the motivation at KenGee is that the employees have their own responsibility, if a problem occurs the employees know what to do, they are innovative and do not have to wait for a manager telling them what to do. Leaders should create a safe, inspiring environment based on the world situation and employees at KenGee are able to participate, have good communication and the ability to influence work at the company.

When recruiting managers KenGee conducts psychological tests, the company looks for curiosity and likeability of human beings in their managers.

Job characteristics

As mentioned earlier that the employees in the factory at KenGee work on a shift system and the company works a lot with the issue of providing variance in the work tasks. Every two hours the workers change station to another one and this movement takes place continuously during the work shift. Drift managers are the one who should recognize employees that influence others. They are the one who are responsible for talking to these employees who stands out and see if they want to advanced or not. When working at KenGee the employees are prepared in advance that the work is done in shifts and therefore since individuals have different preferences some are motivated by working at certain stations while others are not.

Each year an employee discussion exchange is conducted where a routine formula is used as the base of the discussion. Although this conversation takes
place each year daily feedback is important. It is vital that managers communicate when a situation occurs, both possibilities and ways to improve as positive feedback. Both for managers and employees it is essential to know how the two perceive one another.

3.5.1.2 Motivation and other aspect in KenGee
KenGee believes that being equal at work is motivated among employees and it is good to be mixed. When a manager position is available in the factory KenGee looks for women that they encourage to search for the vacant position, also they would like to see women as truck drivers.

However, it is not women that KenGee wants to dominate their workplace, they want to lift out the underrepresented gender. The company chooses to motivate both genders in an equal manner and work towards not having one gender dominate.

On the other hand, KenGee has a lot of different age groups working in the factory and managers have recognized that younger workers prefer working nights and have the weekend off, while older workers do not want to work nights. In order to solve this motivational factor the employees can change shifts with one another and this is done among employees and the managers do not have to get involved. Making the employee feel like he or she can participate at work is highly valued at KenGee. All employees are motivated on an individual basis and therefore they try to generally motivate all employees the same way.

3.5.2 Case two Jing Brand Co., Ltd

Figure 3, Jing Brand Logo (http://www.9998.tv/diqu/c_502949.html)
Company Background

Jing brand Co., Ltd was founded in 1953 and has become a professional healthy foods manufacturer after 60 years of steady growth. As the leader in health industry of China, its product lines have developed from traditional liquor to a health industrial structure, consisting of primarily healthy liquor and secondarily healthy spirits and healthy foods. Jing Brand possess a Healthy Liquor Industrial Park with 26.7 hectares and an Ecological Brewing Industrial Park with 55.3 hectares, reaching an annual capacity of 160,000 tons of base liquor. Now, its products have been sold all over China, holding 335 agencies and 1221 retailers at home and abroad. In 2012, Jing Brand achieved over USD 900 million in annual sales and USD 230 million in tax payment.

Jing Brand persists on the concept of “Making healthy liquors based on pharmaceutical standards”. It firstly applies the digital based TCM extraction techniques in health wines manufacturing in the world. R & D Center of Jing Brand has set up tight relationships with a number of renowned universities and research institutions such as Peking University, Wuhan University, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Chinese Pharmacy University and Hong Kong Baptist University to cooperated on the research fields of TCM engineering and quality control, TCM pharmacological analysis, and Industrial microbial analysis etc. Currently there are more than 100 research staffs, including ten senior engineers (three are professor levels), five Ph.D., six national wine judges and eleven provincial wine judges working in the R&D center.

Jing Brand insists on sustainable development in a harmony pathway. It sticks to bring healthy and better life for people. Jing Brand has set up a digitization information system to push e-business. Employees are the key values of it. Jing Brand provided suitable platforms for individual development. Jing Brand highly insist on energy saving, low carbon emission and environmental protection along enterprise development. Meanwhile, social charity is one of the most important responsibilities for Jing Brand.
3.5.2.1 Employee motivation at Jing Brand

Motivational factors managers can use

The employees in Jing Brand are all motivated differently, but a first place of the motivational factors is the wage since all employees in the plant work on piece rate. The piece rate depends on the company being directed toward production, the goal is to produce the right quality to the tight price. The low price is obvious in the entire company. In comparison with other companies Jing Brand has a wage that is higher than competitors and even higher than the collective agreement. Employees can earn between 5000-6000 RMB per month when working at Jing Brand. The wage is seen as number one of motivation since nobody want to change the piece rate to a lower one after having a high wage. The piece rate depends on the individual and how hard he or she works, it can be said that the worker more or less control their own wage. The piece rate both have ups and downs, on the downs side is that when people feel stressed they blame the piece rate, but the individual choose themselves what level they want to work at with the goal to earn money.

Another motivational factor at Jing Brand is bonuses, the company gives money as bonus for attending work, an employee can receive up to 500 RMB per month and they have to attend work to receive this. After having worked 2000 hours they are given an extra day off and they can gain a total of five days off by attaining work. When working for Jing Brand the employees know that the working hours end at five in the afternoon and it is rarely that employee have to work overtime. After five they have time to spend time with family, or do other activities. Jing Brand have grown to such a large company that the stress of working overtime is not the same as it was in the past when the company were not as big as it is today.

The company has a company gym where employees can work out, but it is not used as much as might be good. The gym is a very good idea, but instead of using it employees crave for a gym card, but the question is that once a person receives it will he or she really use it.
It is really hard to talk about motivation because sometimes when a company makes attempts to motivate its employees it works, but sometimes it can turn out bad. It is clear that employees need to have their own interest, they cannot be married to work and affiliation is vital. It is very important that the employees have tea breaks together during the work day, nobody should sit alone. What people do during the lunch is up to them, some employees go out together and others go home to eat. At the tea breaks there exist certain groups and it is a place of belonging and it is given twice during a work day. Managers can sense that something is wrong when an employee is not present at the tea breaks and actions are taken.

Each time when changes are made at the company the fear of losing one’s job exist. Over the years different attitudes have existed toward Jing Brand, some think that the company is good while others believe it is bad. A good opportunity is that the company is located in Huangshi which is a good city for raising a family, it exist a lot of employees coming from surrounding cities, but the focus now is to hire people located in Huangshi.

DISC-model

In each group at the company there exist an informal leader, and it is both for good and bad. Some individuals are born as natural leaders and this is mostly due to internal factors which make that person take authority over others. Personal characteristics in employees differ and some have a characteristic that motivate others. It is better to have an informal leader that drives other, but is a pain in the ass, than a leader that not drives others to perform. The work task goes hand in hand with the piece rate when motivating employees. The major characteristic of a good leader is one that is steady and motivates employees and have them to perform better.

Incentive profile

In 2000 the company conducted a survey, Prevent, concerning the work environment. Individuals considered that too little information was given, but the information they wanted to know was gossip rather than decision being made. Employees wanted the physical environment to be improved, but few
suggestions were made on how to conduct this. The survey demonstrates that employees think that the work performed is heavy and one-sided, although the work is seem to have reasonable demand. Jing Brand knows that the piece rate is number one in motivation and the rest of the motivational factors are individual.

Leadership

The goal of the company have been clearly stated by Wu Shaoxun and influence the entire company, to improve consumer’s physical fitness and quality of life continuously. No human being has the same motivational level on a constant basis, it goes up and down and as a leader it is not easy to motivate employees if the manager is not motivated themselves. It takes too much time and power to motivate others and performing the task oneself is easier than motivate others to do it. Managers are there to motivate others, some succeed and others do not, but the goal stated, to improve consumer’s physical fitness and quality of life continuously, by Jing Brand is present at all levels of the company and other companies have a hard time obtaining this in their organization levels.

Motivation is individual when working on piece rate and it is very hard for managers to have a private talk to one employee, since it interfere on the piece rate of that person, but as a motivational factor piece rate is number one at Jing Brand. It is acknowledge that workers take pride when Jing Brand sells as many bottles as they do, but the workers do not want to show this pride.

Job characteristics

The employees at Jing Brand work in factory workshop, starting by deal with the raw materials and finishing with the final product being packed. The heaviest work happens inside the factory where everything is put together and it is mostly young people working at these stations because the work is heavy. These employees depend on their co-workers, because they cannot achieve anything before the previous employees have completed the previous work. Employees working at these stations have a higher turnover, but some have
worked there for 30 year, it all depends on what attitudes the workers have toward work.

The company tries not to let employees work at one station all the time and there exist no lack of employees, the challenge with the older generation is that they want to know what they receive if they perform a new task. The work task goes hand in hand with piece rate which is what motivates employees.

3.5.2.2 Motivation and other aspect in Jing Brand
Jing Brand is a male dominated working place and in the factory it exist a total of 30% women working, excluding cleaning. At the office there are more women working and the company would like to have more women working for them. They have noticed that women working in the factory have different insight and are better workers. There should be more women working for the company, but mostly women are looking for other jobs, are afraid of working in men dominated company or do not want to further educate themselves. Women in the factory now are tougher than the women working in the office, women have been noticed to be more controlled by the social environment among other women. There exist no differences at the company when motivating men and women, it just exist different values in the two groups. Men and women have not been noticed to be motivated differently, but different values have been recognized.

The company would like to have more employees that can perform a number of tasks, but employees that have worked for a while do not want to lose any pieces rate and because of this they are unwilling to educate themselves to become more multitasked. Younger people have not worked for the same period of time and their mentality have not yet been shaped as older workers and because of this they are more responsible to become multitasked.

Jing Brand has a variety of age groups working for them and managers have recognized different values in their employees. Young people today have to have the right thinking and it is easy to categorize young people in a specific category, but as the rest of the workforce it has been noticed that some workers work better than others and are motivated differently.
The most recent work generation wants to have structured working hours and know what time of the day work ends and their private life begins, they do not favor flex hours. The older are striving for some kind of carrier, but the young prefer not having to travel far distances to work, have a job where they live and have their social life and be able to work out.

When recruiting people, employees have to communicate with managers and tell them what they want and participate more active at work, but it is obvious that some employees are not willing to do this. The older generation were more willing to take what they wanted, but the new generation need more structure and do not take what they want, they need a manager that tells them what to do. Each employee has the opportunity to show what they are good at, but it is so individual.

4 Empirical Research

First, it is necessary to consider the reliability and validity of the data collected.

Reliability means whether the research findings are reliable and to what level of degree it is reliable. The reliability level is relying on the quantity and the quality of data collected. There is no doubt that the more respondents participate in answering, the more reliable findings will get. However, within a limited time and resources, it is difficult to get ideal respondent rates. Moreover, the higher quality data we collect, the higher level of reliability will be enhanced. That is to say, even though we get a small number of samples at this moment, if the qualities of questionnaires are quite high, it is also possible to attain a reliable finding as well.

Validity describes whether the research survey reaches its objective or not. In other words, it means whether the respondents are representative enough to help the researchers to obtain their objectives. Researchers, cannot falsify the data for raising the validity of research. But we cannot deny the representativeness of our respondents, for our questionnaires are answered by people who are included in our target group.
4.1 Research findings

Totally, we got 127 respondents, who come from small and medium-sized Chinese enterprises. The valid number of questionnaires is 103.

According to our research survey, we by analyzing each question of questionnaires try to give some useful advice. Meanwhile, we created pie charts to help us to get our findings in a better understanding ways.

We have 103 respondents that gave valid questionnaires. Almost half of the people come from private enterprises, and people working in the funded enterprises is goes to second place, and the rest of the people work in the state-owned enterprises.

“What do you think about your company’s future?” half of the employees wrote that they have no ideas about their company’s future and they have never thought about it. Nearly 21% of the respondents think their companies have a great prospect. The rest of the respondents think their companies have an ordinary future. It is clear to see that companies should give their employees more confidences; in the meanwhile, the culture of the company should exist. Because that is a spiritual pillar to tell employees that their companies have great prospects.
Figure 4, The respondents’ satisfaction to the current working hours arrangements of the employer

There are 34% of the total staff thinks their working time and attendance system is quite reasonable, and there are 44% feel it is in general, so it can make a conclusion that this system itself can be improved ulteriorly.

Based on this problem, the suggestion would be like, strengthen the daily attendance management, 5S office management, professional standards, and enhance the concept of time.

![Question No.4](image)

Figure 5, the satisfaction of receive trainings provided by companies

47% staff have participated in the training which held by their own company, and feel satisfied with them. This shows appropriate training can bring advantages to the development for both company and their staff. At the same time, 36% of the total samples had never entered a training before, this present enterprises can cultivate their capability through some basic or deeper training based on their existing circumstance.

After knowing the reason why causes these circumstances, initiatives such as conduct various forms of training (professional skills, management knowledge, sales skills, live video, case simulation, the employed lecturers, school activities, etc.)
Figure 6, the satisfaction of salary that employees got

More than half of the samples feel general or unsatisfied with their salary, this display enterprise are lack of competitiveness in this aspect, this may decrease the staff’s passion of work and may lead to a high rate of job-hopping.

Based on different salary system, promote some staff to a higher position in order to maintain their work motivation. Modify the salary of staff appropriately according to CPI index.

Figure 7, the attitude of companies’ corporate culture

61% of the employees have a general sense of their corporate cultures; indicate that there are a lot of employees have a limited understanding of their own
company’s culture. For the enterprise’ side, they should strengthen the advertisement part of the culture.

After analyzing the result we can easily find the reason behind, ongoing training and group activities of corporate culture help employees to build a sense of belonging.

![Question No. 7](image)

Figure 8, the attitude toward company’s working environment

More than half of the staff think their working environment is good enough, the other 41% and 3% staff feel in general and not so good, this part of the employees have a sensation of stuffy indoor, which needs more ventilation.

Response to these results, improve the working environment for employees; for instance, buy some green plants for both improve the working environment and also can purify the air. Except this, re-build the dining area for staff, such as, add some utility equipment like water dispenser, refreshments, magazines and newspapers.
Figure 9, the result of the feeling about company’s current welfare policy

There are 66% staff think that the company can do better in employees’ benefits policy aspect.

To solve this problem, some ideas are come up with below: 1. Enterprises can buy accident insurance or give a physical examination for those staff who worked in the company at least one year. This is the welfare for the employees, and also shows the company pays attention to staff’s health. 2. Employee who worked for more than five years in the company can increase the number of paid holidays (1-2 days).

Figure 10, the understanding of employees’ companies’ rules and regulations
Only 4% of employees do not understand the rules and regulations of the company. The vast majority of employees have a basic understand of the company’s rules and regulations.

Aim to solve this problem, propaganda the new regulation of the company, and inspect employees’ execution through the communication platform.

Figure 11, the attitude to the clarity of employees’ own job responsibility

Most employees are clearly aware of their responsibilities, only 3% of the staff is not clear, indicating that HR and department describe the job content properly when recruited.

Improving the job analysis of different department, provide a scientific evidence for the recruitment, salary assessment and performance appraisal are some measures can be viable.
Figure 12, the current load volume to the employees

The chart shows 44% of employees feel that the current workload is just acceptable; one third of employees feel that a lot of work. The other 9% of employees feel they have too much work to do, it should reduce the workload appropriately, in order to enhance the quality of the work.

Ensure equitable distribution of work.

Figure 13, the feeling of employees’ attitudes toward the challenge of their work

44% of employees think that their work’s challenging level is in general, 31% of staff considers it is quite challenging. This shows the challenge in the work is not enough in external environment. Companies can allow employees to get access to more and more new things and knowledge.
Managers should strengthen job training for the employees; make job rotation within the department to incentivize the employees.

Figure 14, the employees' attitude about the necessary they think the managers should have the training of management knowledge

There are 76 percentage of the sample employees have a perceiving that the company should train the mid-class managers about the knowledge of management, it means that the average of the mangers who are in the middle layer of the organization are lack of this kind of skills. It is benefit for the level of the management of whole company by increasing such effective courses.

The company should hold the meeting to the mid-class management layer discussing the problems in the work on a fixed time.
Figure 15, the aspects employees’ value the most in addition to salary

More than half of the workers are willing to gain the opportunities to enhance and improve their ability. According to this circumstance, company can arrange the various jobs referring different field in order to cultivating their skills.

The authors suggest that provide the training about work shifting to the employees with the good performance. What is more, it makes the senior workers to teach the new staff about the practical skills.

![Question No.15](image)

Figure 16, employees’ feeling of if they are fully play in the work

There are 50 percent of the samples feel frustrated about not full playing in their works, which indicates that the company face a shortage of creativeness, lead to a situation of lacking enough chances to staff to do works independently.

The managers should adopt the responsibility system in some part of the work in order to enhancing the enthusiasm of working for employees.
Figure 17, the employees’ feeling of their thought about their work at the moment

There are more than half of the staff feel that the resent work they have is suitable for them and they have the confidence of having the ability to do it well. That shows that the companies have a clear and right position and work arrangement and distribution.

More attention should be paid of building a effective and scientific communication system in order to giving a assistance to workers of increasing their motivation of working.

Figure 18, the percentage that employees' can/cannot got any help from their supervisors

All of the staff can receive a useful assist from their superiors and colleagues. However, there is still 3% of assistance from superiors and colleagues are not
reaching the expectation of workers themselves. Above all, company has a harmonious internal environment.

More concern should be paid on to the workers and workers should be active to provide the assist to others who needs the support.

![Question No. 18](image)

Figure 19, the percentage of the chance that employees’ can talk to their supervisors about their feelings and views

According to the data in the survey, the staff who usually and sometimes communicating with their superiors about their feeling and perceives occupied the first and second position with 42% and 33% rate. It demonstrates that there is a fluent communication channel between workers and leaders.

As an improvement, arranging the effective communication training and give an assist to the left 20% staff who are not able to find the appropriate ways of communication in how to communicate.
Figure 20, the feeling that employees’ got to describe their company

With the question of “How do you describe/judge your company?” We concluded and divided the answers them into three parts. The first option was strong satisfaction and have no any requirements for companies, 37% of the respondents selected this option. Secondly, satisfaction and hope companies can improve employee motivation systems, thirdly, total dissatisfaction and strong hope that companies can put more attention on the employee motivation system. The second and third options are nearly equal. So we hope all the companies can focus on the employee motivation system so that their employees have a great working environment.

Finally, the question of “Do you have any other opinions about your enterprise’s employee motivation system? How do you think managers can improve employee’s motivation system?” About the employee motivation system, 67% respondents think their employee motivation systems should be improved, or they want to job-hop, to see if they find better jobs. As we can see, employees value their welfare and benefits. Besides, there is no doubt that almost 91% of the respondents think HRM managers should communicate with employees to know what they really need and want, so that enterprises’ employee motivation system can be improved.
4.2 Limitation of the study

Our biggest limitation of this research is that the quantity of the samples is inadequate. For people who want to make a depth analysis on our topic, i.e. employee satisfaction and work motivation in Chinese small and medium-sized private enterprises, so would be better to collect more figures from the target population.

According to a research by the National Bureau of Statistics of China, in 2011, there were 670.4 million employees working in state-owned enterprises, and 96.79 million in private enterprises. We assume that only 40 percent of the people work in small and medium-sized enterprises. Our main target group is consists of 306.9 million people. If we want to make our research more reliable, we need to receive at least 153.4 million questionnaires back. Thus it is big problem, within a limited time and without financial support, to get satisfied quantities. Although the number of samples we got is very small, fortunately, the quality of respondents we got tends to be at a high level.

5 Conclusion

The final chapter contains our findings and conclusions on motivation from a researcher perspective. The chapter will answer the stated research questions in previous chapters and finally implications and recommendations will be presented.

5.1 How can Chinese small and medium sized enterprises motivate their employees?

The research has revealed different findings; it is interesting to see that no clear answer has been made on what motivates people since each individual is so different and the motivational factors are triggered differently. Individuals are very unique and bring their personalities with them to work and no overall conclusion can be said to motivate everybody equal. This makes the work of managers’ difficult since they have to recognize each employee as separated individuals with different motivational factors.
Theories describe many different motivational factors that managers might recognize motivate their employees and in our case study we found a bound to internal and external motivational factors. It was interesting to investigate two companies with employees working in track having so different strategies of motivating the employees.

From the above findings the following conclusions can be made:

- Managers should use both internal and external motivational factors as it is better to focus on both rather than assuming that one is dominant

- Companies have different strategies concerning motivating employees, some are focused on their personnel while other focus on the performance of the organization

- Managers should be motivated themselves (be trained) before trying to motivate others, otherwise the effort will be a waste of time for the company

- Feedback and communicating with employees are a great part of the managerial work task, which contributes to increased motivation

- There still exist a couple of ways to give positive influence for motivating employees, such as better welfare, benefits and higher salary

5.2 How can the relationship between motivation, gender and age in the workplace be described?

Gender is a main factor which influenced motivating measures. Since the number of women entering work occupations is increasing. It is very interesting to see that the role of women as a housewife has changed so much and become women at work. In the discussion in the above section it is clear that individuals are motivated differently and this is also the case with male and female employees at the two companies.

The two companies in the case study have indications of different motivational factors, but do not have any differences concerning gender in comparison with motivation.
It is demonstrated that younger workers are motivated differently than older generation. The new generation does not have the same thinking as the old one and they live in a different world, loyalty is not the same and changes need to occur constantly. Companies are faced with the challenge of holding on to this new generation while not putting aside the old generation. The fact that the generations differ are due to patterns, qualities, values, assets and styles. Therefore managers can if they want to use different strategies for motivating the generations. In the past managers knew they had their workers and that most of them were motivated to stay in the same company, but today managers cannot have the same feeling of security concerning the younger generation. They will contribute with new knowledge and an urge to make changes that suits them, but they will not stay in a company forever.

The two companies in the case study have indications of different motivational factors, but do not have any differences concerning age in comparison with motivation.

From the above findings the following conclusions can be made:

- Managers should not assume that their employees are categorized into stereotypes with the same motivational factors, since not all employees in the same division might be motivated the same

- The way genders are divided in companies often depends on what industry they are productive in, since certain industries are perceived as male or female

- It might be easier to have motivated employees if their manager is of the same since they might have the same values and preferences

- The challenge for companies is not only to keep the new generation at work, they cannot overlook the old generation just because they are more loyal
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Appendix 1

**Questionnaire of Employee Motivation System**

We are trying to find out what kinds of problems exist in Chinese Small and Medium sized private enterprise, in employee motivation system area. We are trying to find out the basic countermeasures accordingly. In order to ensure an accurate and scientific study we can get, please fill in according to your actual situation. Thank you very much for taking time to participate in this survey.

1. What is the nature of your enterprise?
   A. State-owned Enterprise
   B. Private Enterprise
   C. Collective Enterprise
   D. Funded Enterprise (Sino-foreign Joint Ventures, Enterprise with Sino-foreign Cooperation, Wholly Foreign-owned Enterprise)

2. What do you think about your company’s future?

3. Do you think the current arrangements of working time and attendance system is reasonable?
   A. Very reasonable
   B. Quite well
   C. In general
   D. Not that reasonable
   E. Unreasonable

4. Have you accept any training provide by your company after you entered into it? Are you satisfied with them or is it useful or not?
   A. Yes, and I am satisfied with it/them.
   B. Yes, but I am not satisfied with it/them.
   C. No, I did not get any training from my company.

5. Are you satisfied with your salary at the moment?
   A. Very satisfied
   B. Quite satisfied
   C. In general
   D. Not that satisfied
   E. Dissatisfied
Appendix 1

6. What is your attitude toward the company’s corporate culture?
   A. Very satisfied
   B. Quite satisfied
   C. In general
   D. Not that satisfied
   E. Dissatisfied

7. What do you feel about your company’s working environment?
   A. Very good
   B. Quite good
   C. In general
   D. Not so good
   E. Bad

8. Do you think the company’s current welfare policy is perfect? (Holiday gifts, birthday gifts, healthy, paid holidays, social insurance, etc.) If not perfect, what aspects need to be improved?
   A. Perfect
   B. Not that perfect
   C. How to improve in your opinion:

9. In which level you have an understanding of your company’s rules and regulations?
   A. Fully understand
   B. Basically understand
   C. Not so understand
   D. Completely not understand

10. Are you clear about your own job responsibility?
    A. Yes
    B. No

11. What do you think of your current workload?
    A. Too much
    B. Quite a lot
    C. Appropriate
    D. Not enough
    E. Can be organized

12. What do you think about the challenge of your work?
13. Do you think it is necessary for the company's managers to having the training of management knowledge?

A. Yes, it is necessary
B. No, it is not necessary

14. In addition to salary, what aspect do you value the most?

A. The opportunity of improve yourself
B. A good environment of working
C. Harmonious interpersonal relationship
D. Accomplishment of working

15. Do you think you are full play in your work?

A. I am doing my best
B. I am not full play in my work
C. No sense
D. This work buried my ability
E. There is no opportunity to let my talent to be shown

16. In a word, what do you think of your work at the moment?

A. It suits me well, and I have confident I can do it well by my ability
B. It is what I like, but my ability is not enough
C. It is not what I expected, but I can do it well
D. It is not suitable for me, and I want to change another one

17. If you meet difficulties during the work, would your superiors and colleagues be able to provide useful support and assistant?

A. Always
B. Sometimes
C. Seldom
D. Never

18. Do you have a chance to talk to your superiors about your feelings and views of your work?

A. Always
B. Usually
C. Sometimes
D. Seldom
E. Never
19. How do you describe/judge your company? (open questions)

20. Do you have any other opinion about your enterprise employee motivation system? How do you think managers can improve employee motivation system?
Appendix 2

员工激励制度问卷调查

尊敬的女士/先生您好，非常感谢您在百忙之中抽空参与这个问卷调查。我们正在对企业员工激励机制问题进行调查与研究。目的在于探索激励机制方面在中国中型小型企业中的问题并探讨基本的解决方案。本卷不记名，为了保证研究的真实性和科学性，请根据您的实际情况填写。非常感谢您的参与。

1. 您所在的企业性质？
   
   A 国有企业
   B 私有企业
   C 集体企业
   D 三资企业（中外合作企业、中外合资企业、外商独资企业）

2. 您如何看待您公司的未来发展如何？

3. 您认为现在您公司的工作安排时间及考勤制度是否合理
   
   A 很合理
   B 较合理
   C 一般
   D 较不合理
   E 很不合理

4. 您到公司后接受过公司组织的培训吗？满意或者有用吗？
   
   A 有，很满意
   B 有，不满意或者无用
   C 没有

5. 您目前满意您的薪水待遇吗？
   
   A 很满意
   B 较满意
   C 一般
      D 较不满意
      E 不满意

6. 您对公司的企业文化持何种态度？
A 很满意
Appendix 2
B 较满意
C 一般
   D 较不满意
   E 不满意

7. 您觉得公司的工作环境如何？
A 很好
B 较好
C 一般
   D 较差
   E 差

8. 您认为公司目前的福利政策（节日礼物、生日礼物、健康体检、带薪假期、社会保险）是否完善，若不完善，还需要进行哪方面的改善？
A 完善
B 不完善
C 改善：

9. 您对公司的规章制度了解程度如何？
A 很了解
B 基本了解
C 不太了解
   D 完全不了解

10. 您对自己的工作职责是否明确？
A 是
B 不是

11. 您对目前的工作量的看法是？
A 非常多
B 很多
C 刚好
   D 太少
   E 可协调

12. 您认为工作的挑战性如何？
A 很有挑战性
B 较有挑战性

13. 您认为是否有必要对公司的中层经理进行管理知识培训？

A 有，这很有必要
B 没有，这没有必要

14. 除了薪酬外，您最看重的是？

A 提高自己能力的机会
B 好的工作环境
C 和谐的人际关系
D 工作的成就感

15. 您认为自己在工作上是否得到了充分发挥？

A 已尽我多能
B 未能完全发挥
C 没感觉
D 对我的能力有些埋没
E 没有让我施展的机会

16. 您认为目前的工作？

A 很适合，并且有信心、有能力做好
B 是我喜欢的工作，但自己的能力有所欠缺
C 不是我理想的工作，但是我能够做好
D 不太适合，希望换一个岗位

17. 您在工作中遇到困难，上司和同事能够提供有力的支持和协助吗？

A 总是
B 有时
C 很少
D 从不

18. 您是都有机会向上级领导畅谈您的感受与看法？

A 总是
B 经常
C 偶尔
D 极少
E 几乎没有

Appendix 2

19. 您如何评价您的公司

20. 您对企业的员工激励制度有何看法？您觉得管理者应该怎么改善企业员工激励制度？