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Abstract

Employee motivation is one of the most studied issues in organizational behavior, and is the subject of an incredible number of prescriptive and descriptive articles in the hospitality press. This emphasis is made with good reason: Understanding and using motivation techniques is central for managing people in general, and managing people is a central concern for the hospitality industry. Further, customer satisfaction has been shown to be strongly affected by customers' perception of employee effort (Mohr & Bitner, 1995), and effort is what motivation is about. The last decade has seen consolidation and steady advances in our understanding and ability to apply several different theories of employee motivation. Much of the relevant empirical work, however, has taken place outside of the hospitality industry. Research within the hospitality industry has tended to draw on a relatively small pool of motivational concepts.

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Comments

Motivation Research in Hospitality Between 1990 and 2001: A Prescriptive Review of the Literature

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Introduction

Employee motivation is one of the most studied issues in organizational behavior, and is the subject of an incredible number of prescriptive and descriptive articles in the hospitality press. This emphasis is made with good reason: Understanding and using motivation techniques is central for managing people in general, and managing people is a central concern for the hospitality industry. Further, customer satisfaction has been shown to be strongly affected by customers' perception of employee effort (Mohr & Bitner, 1995), and effort is what motivation is about. The last decade has seen consolidation and steady advances in our understanding and ability to apply several different theories of employee motivation. Much of the relevant empirical work, however, has taken place outside of the hospitality industry. Research within the hospitality industry has tended to draw on a relatively small pool of motivational concepts.

This paper will review the body of empirical research studies of employee motivation in hospitality settings, and will integrate the discussion with a broad-brush description of the state of motivation research in general. This broader review gives rise to several exhortations for hospitality researchers and practitioners: First, that to consider only research conducted within

the hospitality industry is to fall prey to the worst kind of parochialism and is to blind oneself to a wealth of practical and theoretical insight. Second, that laboratory studies as well as field studies offer views into critical mechanisms and techniques. Almost every industry considers its challenges to be utterly unique — however, the uniqueness argument is unnecessarily limiting. Informed practitioners will draw on tools and ideas developed in a variety of settings. And good scholarship will likewise be informed by the broader body of disciplinary research.

The current state of research on work motivation as a general topic is reviewed admirably elsewhere (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Kanfer, 1990; Mitchell, 1997). This chapter will draw on these reviews and others, but does not comprehensively summarize them. I recommend that serious scholars of motivation read these reviews directly. This review of hospitality motivation research drew on a search of the Lodging, Restaurant and Tourism Index (Purdue University) using keywords drawn from both general motivation and from specific motivation theories. We narrowed the search to include only quantitative empirical studies completed since 1990, but retained a few qualitative studies for illustrative purposes. We also searched ABI-inform, a database of management publications, using similar criteria plus a use of hospitality settings, and we collected a few more references from descriptions in the general motivation research reviews. Given the breadth of hospitality industry settings and the wide number of motivation approaches that use distinct terminology, it is likely that some published hospitality motivation research slipped through our net. Further, the current work summarizes many studies, and in a few cases the relevant points differed from those the authors emphasized. I apologize for any omissions or real or perceived inaccuracies.

What is Motivation?

Motivation is generally accepted as an invisible, internal force that determines the intensity, direction, and duration of voluntary actions (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Mitchell, 1997; Pinder, 1998). It is a hypothetical notion that is not directly observable or measurable — we can only infer it from the manifestations described above and from the subjective experiences of motivation and of effort (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). Mitchell (1997) notes that motivation can only be tested as part of a larger theory that specifies causes and consequent behavior. Mitchell describes the prevalent differentiation between motivation content theories and process theories. Content theories describe the underlying needs and drives that arouse people and cause them to focus. Process theories describe how those needs operate, how people form intentions and commitments, and how mental processes impel behavior. Content theories may be conceived as describing human drives, while process theories describe the translation of those drives into action.

Motivation is conceived as one of several factors that affect employee task performance, but it is accorded a central position in many performance models. Mitchell (1997, p. 63) provides an overview that describes how the impact of individual employees' predispositions and skills and the job context on performance is mediated by motivation:

Motivation research has not achieved the status of a unified theoretical framework (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Kanfer, 1990). Instead, several streams of research have emerged from different conceptual backgrounds. These different streams emphasize different factors and often draw on different methodologies. They may be conceived as contributing to the development of a diverse set of managerial tools, or as pieces that all contribute to the understanding of a larger

puzzle of human behavior. Mitchell (1997, p. 58) offers a succinct summary of the practical

implications of the larger body of motivation research:

> "The research results are convincing that people are more motivated in situations
>
> that (1) meet their needs (2) have goals, (3) reward good performance, (4) are fair
>
> and equitable,
>
> (5) have stimulating engaging jobs, (6) include friends and team members that
>
> also work hard, and (7) have an accepted culture that emphasizes hard work and
>
> commitment".

This chapter will discuss the streams of research from which these recommendations

emerge in order, and will discuss the existing hospitality research within each. An additional

section will briefly consider the role of leadership in motivation. Practical and research

implications will be explored and discussed along the way.

Needs and Self-Reported Motivators

By far the most popular area for hospitality-based motivation research has focused on

needs. These needs are sometimes examined simply in terms of workers' self-described

motivators, and are sometimes examined as personality variables, such as the need for

achievement. While needs-focused research is often derided as atheoretical (Ambrose & Kulik,

1999), it can still be useful in highlighting the fact that different groups of employees often work

for different reasons. Managers often assume, mistakenly, that his or her employees would

respond to the same incentive system that the manager would prefer for herself.

Kovach (1987) summarized a framework that has led to a substantial body of hospitality

studies. Kovach's approach is simply to ask workers what they want from their job. These

studies typically list several factors of the job, the work environment, and the compensation package, and ask employees either to rank their importance, or to simply rate how important each one is. Kovach's list included good wages, tactful discipline, job security, interesting work, feeling of being "in on things," sympathetic help with personal problems, opportunities for advancement and development, good working conditions, personal loyalty to employees, and appreciation for accomplishments. Kovach examined studies conducted between 1946 and 1986 with thousands of industrial employees, and found that employees consistently ranked interesting work, appreciation, and feeling "in on things" higher than good wages. Further, he found that managers were often incorrect in their guesses about what factors their employees would rank as being most important.

Charles and Marshall (1992) performed a similar study of 225 Caribbean hospitality workers and found that employees ranked good wages and good working conditions as first and second most important, respectively. A study of Las Vegas casino dealers found that these employees ranked good wages and job security first and second (Darder, 1994). Simons and Enz (1995) studied 278 employees from 12 US and Canadian hotels, and found Good wages and job security also to be the factors ranked first and second. Simons and Enz suggest that the marked difference between the results from manufacturing industries as reported by Kovach and those in hospitality seems likely to emerge from experienced lacks: Line-level hospitality jobs generally do not pay as well as do manufacturing jobs, but are typically less repetitive and hence more interesting than manufacturing jobs. Both the studies by Charles and Marshall and that by Simons and Enz reported differences in the factor rankings by employees of different age groups, with, for example, "opportunity for advancement" being more important for younger workers and "job security" being more important for older workers. Simons and Enz also reported

different priorities described by employees in different departments, with, for example, employees in Human Resources and Sales being more strongly driven by opportunity than are employees in Housekeeping.

[Figure 1]

This approach to study has been taken up by hospitality researchers in different parts of the world to add to our understanding of culture differences and our ability to apply motivation concepts in different countries. Siu, Tsang and Wong (1997) examined surveys completed by 1,245 employees at 72 Hong Kong hotels. They found that the top three reported motivators were advancement opportunities, loyalty to employees, and good wages, respectively. Like Simons and Enz, they found differences in the priorities reported by employees of different departments. Wong, Siu and Tsang (1999) performed a secondary analysis of this data. They found differences in reported priorities based on respondents' sex, marital status, education level, and salary. Meudell and Rodham (1998) studied 57 managers and employees at pubs in the United Kingdom. They asked for ratings rather than rankings. They found that managers rated many factors as very important personal motivators, including job security, money, bonus, promotion opportunities, the way they were managed, their colleagues, and autonomy. In contrast, employees focused on salary, bonus, and fringe benefits. Finally, Upchurch, Davies and Sverdlin (2000) studied 202 employee surveys from a hotel in St. Petersburg, Russia. The study found that employees reported being most strongly motivated by salary, job security, and a positive relationship with their supervisor.

Other scholars have taken similar approaches. Lam, Baum and Pine (2001) studied 171 managers at Hong Kong Chinese restaurants. They investigated which facets of satisfaction —

e.g. self-reported satisfaction with the work itself, with pay, with the work environment, and so on — were most closely associated with global measures of satisfaction. The most strongly aligned facets were satisfaction with rewards, with the work environment, and with the work itself. Chitiris (1990) surveyed 130 senior hotel managers in Greece. He reported that younger managers were less satisfied and more strongly motivated than were older managers. He also found that university graduates were more motivated than were high school graduates, and that company tenure increases motivation. Note that the causal direction for these last two findings is ambiguous, as a high level of motivation is likely to drive a person to seek education and to stay with the company. While the method of these latter two studies differs slightly, the result of this study seems to fall in line with the work based on the Kovach framework of self-described motivators.

Taken as a body of work, this framework of self-described motivators provides some insight into differences in employee desires across industries, worker categories, and national boundaries. From a practical standpoint, it reminds managers not to make assumptions about desirable incentives. For instance, a general manager I know was surprised to learn that her Hispanic housekeeping staff was terrified by a promise that excellent performance would lead to consideration for promotion to managerial ranks — in conversations with the staff it became clear that these employees were more concerned about solidarity with their friends. Mitchell (1997) suggests that a practical implication of this type of work is the promotion of cafeteria-style incentive systems and flextime approaches to staffing.

From a research standpoint, this line of research suffers two challenges: First, as Ambrose and Kulik (1999) note, it is not well-grounded in any theoretical perspective that would describe the origins of preferences or even their behavioral consequences. Such integration

would be very desirable both as a way to enhance insight and as a way to build and test practical programs. A second challenge is the almost exclusive use of self-report data in this research. While the measurement of psychological constructs necessarily relies on self- report and surveys, it would be very desirable to link the survey data with objective performance outcomes such as customer satisfaction measures, restaurant or hotel financial performance, actual employee turnover rates, and so on. Research that establishes such links would also advance this work from being merely descriptive toward the establishment of causal relationships, which in turn would dramatically enhances its prescriptive potential.

A second stream of research draws on the notion of motivation as a personality attribute or a quasi-permanent disposition. Helmrich, Sawin and Carsrud (1986) studied 268 airline telephone reservations agents. They administered surveys that measured agents' personal need for achievement and interpersonal orientation and examined the association between these dispositions and objective measures of job performance such as percentage of time spent in direct contact with customers and number of customers helped. They found that these relationships were weak or nonexistent during the initial three months of employment, but that performance after four months of employment was strongly affected by these personality traits. They explain their findings as representative of an initial "honeymoon" period for new employees, wherein they are motivated by a sense of novelty and strong job commitment — after that initial period, the employees' personal disposition dominates their motivation. Bartkus, Hartman and Parent (1994) surveyed 138 travel representatives. They found that self-reported performance was highest for representatives who were highly experienced and described high need for achievement, and lowest for those who were relatively inexperienced and described low need for achievement, with the two off-diagonal groups — experienced with low need for

achievement and inexperienced with high need for achievement — showing similar levels of performance. They understand their results as representing the unique performance contributions of skill and motivation. Bartkus et al assert that travel representatives' experience and motivation levels are partially substitutable for each other in determining sales performance, but that training and incentive systems may be important tools for responding to different employees' performance plateaus.

Bartkus and Howell (1999) expanded the study of travel agent temperaments to consider the impact of the "Type A Behavior Pattern," which includes both the dimensions of achievement motivation and impatience/irritability. These two elements often co-occur as part of a personality constellation. As they predicted, a study of 38 travel agents showed that achievement motivation was positively associated with self-reported sales, but that impatience/irritability was negatively associated with sales. The authors conclude that the Type A Behavior Pattern represents a two-edged sword for travel agent performance — that, as a constellation, it has both positive and negative performance affects.

Ross (1994) studied the needs for achievement and autonomy in a sample of 274 Australian hospitality workers. He found that high employee levels of service ideals were associated with a high need for achievement and a low need for autonomy.

Research that considers motivation as an aspect of personality implies, from a practical standpoint, the importance of careful employee selection processes. The use of such personality surveys in employment screening, however, would require additional validation of their performance links in the specific work context under consideration. Further, it would be important for employers in countries with equal opportunity laws to demonstrate that such surveys did not inadvertently discriminate against certain ethnic or racial groups. Personality-

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based motivation approaches, however, are extremely limited in their usefulness for the management of existing employees.

From a research perspective, the integration of personality theory into motivation research has the advantage of offering a body of psychological theory that attempts to explain the origins of the phenomena under study. However, the small quantity of causal research, and the mixed set of empirical results in this area, suggest that additional research needs to be done on the links between personality and performance. However, there is some concern, which applies to both research and practical applications, that dispositions are often only weakly predictive of actual behavior, and that the strength of situational demands need to be considered carefully for effective prediction or intervention (Mitchell, 1997).

Goal Setting

Mitchell (1997, p. 61) describes goals as hiving emerged as "the major underlying explanatory mechanism for motivational processes." The effectiveness of goal-setting in affecting employee effort has been well-established in a variety of experimental and industrial contexts (For reviews of empirical research see e.g. Locke & Latham, 1990; Tubbs, 1986). However, the author was unable to find any studies that applied goal-setting principles to hospitality setting.

Research and practical applications of goal-setting have yielded the following principles (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Mitchell, 1997): First, specific goals have been proven to be much more effective in driving effort than have general, "do your best" goals (Locke, 1996). Effective goals must be challenging, and must be personally accepted by the employees to affect their performance. Acceptance suggests both that employees must believe the goals are attainable, and

that they are incented to pursue them. A meta-analysis of data from 83 independent study samples highlights the role of goal commitment or acceptance and discusses ways in which it can be influenced (Klein, Wesson, Hollenbeck, & Alge, 1999). Specific feedback that measures progress toward the goal supports goal effectiveness.

Mitchell (1997, p. 72) summarizes this framework eloquently:

"At the heart of goal-setting theory is the idea of purposeful action. People select goals that are related to the fulfillment of their needs and the aspiration and the seeking of goals is central to the process of living itself (Locke & Latham, 1990). Conscious, goal-directed action accounts for most of what we do; it is this seeking that fuels the motivational process.

The organizational research bears this statement out. People work harder and perform better with goals than without goals. Difficult goals are better than easy goals as long as they are accepted. Specific goals are more motivating than general goals in terms of task performance. Goal setting works: Goals prompt people to exert more effort, focus attention, develop strategies, and persist in the face of failure".

Goals can sometimes have negative effects, as when they cause employees to focus on goal attainment to the exclusion of other job behaviors, or when individual goals impede cooperative efforts among employees. However, tasks that require cooperative efforts may be enhanced by group goals (O'Leary-Kelly, Martocchio, & Frink, 1994).

Goal-setting appears to be a powerful and well-demonstrated technique that warrants increased application and research in hospitality settings. Management-by-Objectives ("MBO")

techniques based on goal-setting have proven to be effective performance enhancers (Rodgers &

Hunter, 1991), and these, too, warrant further examination in hospitality settings. A question that

remains unanswered for hospitality applications of this work is the extent to which customer

service can be quantified in a way that is fully accepted by employees and that provides feedback

on a short enough cycle-time to drive goal-oriented behavior effectively. Guest or customer

satisfaction assessments might serve the purpose, and the implementation of technologies that

allow of rapid turnaround of guest reports would certainly support this approach.

Outcomes, Incentives, and Reinforcement Theory

Another set of motivation theories looks at the general category of outcomes. This set

would be considered to include the management of consequences based on principles of operant

conditioning (Skinner, 1969) and expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964). Practical applications of this

framework include Organizational Behavior Modification (Research summarized by Luthans &

Stajkovic, 1999; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997) and Gainsharing (Research summarized by

Welboume & Mejia, 1995).

The empirical results demonstrated by organizational behavior modification are

impressive, with a meta-analysis of 14 independent studies with 2,818 subjects reporting an

average task improvement of 17% (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997). Stajkovic and Luthans report

that the effects in manufacturing settings were somewhat stronger than they were in service

settings, but that both settings showed strong positive effects. They reported further that financial

incentives were more effective in service industries than nonfmancial or social rewards, while

there was little difference between the two in manufacturing settings — a finding that is

supported by the previously discussed research on employee self-described motivators. However,

they suggested that social rewards can enhance the effectiveness of financial rewards.

Behavior modification techniques have shown mixed results in hospitality settings, perhaps due to challenges of implementation. Waldersee and Luthans (1994) attempted to improve 111 fast-food employees' manager-rated performance by setting up frequent, structured social reinforcers — namely, written notes from managers. Their approach was not successful. LaFleur and Hyten (1995), however, were able to increase 26 hotel banquet employees' event setup accuracy and timeliness from a pre-intervention average of 68.8% to over 99%. They accomplished this impressive result using a combination of task checklists, feedback, goal-setting, and monetary bonuses. Welsh, Bernstein and Luthans (1992) applied a variant of reinforcement called the Premack Principle to a small sample of fast food employees. Under this approach, the reward for excellent performance is a change to the employee's preferred task or station. Welsh et al found clear positive performance effects and suggest further studies of this technique.

Gainsharing, including pay-for-performance programs, has also shown promising empirical results in a wide variety of settings (Welboume & Mejia, 1995). Apparently, the critical factor in determining the effectiveness of such programs is the extent to which they have been systematically integrated into the policies, HR practices, and culture of the organization, and the extent to which these elements are internally consistent and interrelated. Challenges of such approaches are the accurate specification of performance criteria, performance monitoring, and the management of employee perceptions of the program as fair.

The only quantitative study of gainsharing in hospitality we were able to locate assessed the issue of ownership. Employee stock ownership plans, or ESOPS, have been recommended for use in hospitality organizations as they align the company's interests with employee incentives, and are supposed to get employees to "think like owners" (Schmidgall & Bechtel,

1990). Gu and Kim (2001) studied the performance of 113 publicly traded restaurant companies, and found that managerial ownership levels were associated with company financial performance. However, United Airlines' application of an ESOP was widely recognized as a failure, largely due to employees' mistrust of the administration of the system and their disbelief in its personal benefit (Cohen, 2001).

One might argue that the prevalence of tipped professions in hospitality serves to incent or reward tipped employees for excellent service. However, Lynn and colleagues (Lynn, 2001; Lynn & Graves, 1996) report a substantial body of empirical data that shows that customer service perceptions are almost unrelated to tip sizes. Lynn suggests that the weakness of this relationship may ultimately serve to reward tipped employees for sheer volume rather than quality of work, and that this reward structure might not serve the employer's interest. Further, Lynn (2001) recommends the use of additional measures and incentives for service to compensate for the remarkably poor link between service and tips.

In sum, systematic applications of behavior modification systems based on contingent rewards, and different forms of gainsharing whereby employees benefit from the success of the individual restaurant or hotel, both appear to hold considerable promise as practical tools and as areas for applied hospitality research. Whether one is applying these tools in a managerial or consulting capacity or as a researcher, critical challenges appear to be careful measurement or documentation, and transparency of the process to the employees.

Equity, Fairness, and Justice

Equity theory describes employees' perceptions of the match between their inputs in terms of effort, experience, skills, personal qualifications, and environments tolerated and their

outcomes in terms of pay and other rewards (Adams, 1963). Employees typically assess this equation through comparison with another person's "deal." Researchers have consistently shown that workers who feel they are undercompensated tend to lower their performance as an input (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). Sheehan (1993) describes a series of studies that show that workers often experience a sense of inequity when their coworkers leave for better jobs. Ambrose and Kulik summarize additional research that links equity perceptions with employee turnover. Greenberg (1990) found that employee thefts in manufacturing plants increased substantially when employees were asked to accept a pay cut, but that thorough and sensitive explanations by management were able to reduce perceptions of inequity and resultant thefts. While no recently documented research has examined equity perceptions within hospitality contexts, it is clearly an issue with which hospitality managers must concern themselves.

A related line of research has expanded the lens from employees' perception of the fairness of outcomes to their sense of the fairness of company procedures and interpersonal treatment. These three perceptions are termed distributive justice, procedural justice, and interpersonal justice, respectively (Bies, 1987, 2000). While most justice research has focused on employee attitudinal outcomes such as satisfaction and commitment, a very relevant line of work has looked at the link between justice perceptions and Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (Lee, 1995; see Chapter 13). Organizational Citizenship Behaviors, or "OCBs," are those activities whereby employees enact positive discretionary behaviors that fall outside of their formal job descriptions (Organ, 1988). In essence, research has shown that employees who believe they are treated unfairly are less likely to go beyond the call of duty for their company.

Blancero and Johnson (1997; 1998) proposed a form of OCB that was specific to a service context and termed it, "Discretionary Service Behavior" or DSB. DSB is defined as those

behaviors whereby employees "go the extra mile" — beyond formal job descriptions — to address guests' service needs and desires. Blancero and Johnson found that the extent to which car rental agents felt they were fairly treated by management affected their self- reported DSB. Simons and Roberson (2001) studied 4,539 employees at 97 US hotel properties. They found that employee perceptions of interpersonal and procedural justice strongly affected their levels of commitment to the organization and satisfaction with supervision, and these in turn affected reported DSBs as well as guest service satisfaction ratings and employee turnover. Simons and McLean Parks (2000) used the same data to examine the impact of employee perceptions of managers' promise-keeping and espoused value-enacted value alignment, which they term, "Behavioral Integrity" or BI. They found that employee perceptions of BI were very strongly predictive of hotel profitability levels, and that the relationship between BI and profitability was partially mediated by employee trust in management, their organizational commitment, DSB, guest satisfaction, and employee turnover. Another application of justice theory was done by Murrmann and Murrmann (1992), who found that employee perceptions of injustice predicted their stated intention to vote for unionization.

In sum, employee fairness perceptions appear, from initial hospitality studies, to be strongly linked to their organizational commitment, to turnover and service quality, and to the likelihood of unionization votes. Research in a manufacturing industry further suggests that it will be associated with employee theft rates (Greenberg, 1990). Managers would do well to measure and track employee fairness perceptions and behavioral integrity perceptions as part of regular employee attitude surveys. Additional research would be useful to confirm these initial findings and to examine the ways that employers can affect workers' fairness perceptions through policy interventions, interpersonal skills training for managers, managerial incentives,

policy communication approaches, and the management and application of employee performance consequences.

Social Norms and Organizational Cultures

Another factor to consider as an element of motivation is the social context. The human animal is a social creature. That means that few outcomes can be as rewarding or as punishing as the approval or disapproval of one's peer-group, respectively. Peer-groups tend to generate normative expectations or standards of member conduct, and to attach strong social consequences to the adherence to or the violation of those norms (Schneider & Reichers, 1983). Thus, the creation of normative standards and climates (Schneider & Reichers, 1983; Schneider & Rentsch, 1988) can have a strong impact on employee motivations to perform. Of special relevance for hospitality industries is the notion of employee climates for service (Schneider, Bowen, Ehrhardt, & Holcombe, 2000). A second way in which the social context is critical is that people rely on their peers for information and judgments about ambiguous events or situations. A substantial body of research has shown that employees' attitudes (Mossholder, Bennett, & Martin, 1998) and their perceptions of their work environments and their jobs (Mitchell, 1997) are strongly affected by the views and attitudes of their coworkers.

A study by Hays and Hill (2001) used a construct they termed, "motivation/vision," which they define as "the degree to which a firm's employees have a desire to provide high quality service and have a clear vision of the role that service plays in the company's overall strategy" (p. 340). They found, in a study of 250 employees from 25 hotels that the level of employees' average self-described motivation/vision was associated with guest perceptions of service quality. Several additional studies have demonstrated strong links between employee climates and service quality (Baker & Fesenmaier, 1997; King & Garey, 1997; Meudell & Gadd,

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1994; Taner, 2001). Cha, Khan and Murrmann (2000) studied the gap between employees' views of their own service orientation and employees' views of their managers' service orientation, and found that larger gaps were associated with lower levels of organizational commitment. Organizational climates have also been associated with empowerment (Sparrowe, 1995), with learning (Teare, 1997), and with employee turnover (Deery & Shaw, 1999).

There is clearly more that should be explored about employee climates and motivation in hospitality. It may be argued that employees can best be motivated by the combined effect of high performance norms and pride in membership in the organization (Balazs, 2001). While the present review of this topic is far from exhaustive, there is substantial practical benefit and research opportunity in the exploration and quantitative study of newcomer socialization to norms, efforts to change existing norms, and the links between norms and performance consequences.

Employee Commitment

Employees' incentive to adhere to norms is in part determined by their commitment to the organization. Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979) define Affective Organizational Commitment as essentially an employee's pride in membership, loyalty, and caring about their company. Research has shown substantial links between employee commitment and their intentions to remain with the company and to expend effort on the company's behalf (Mitchell, 1997). Several aspects of employee commitment may be identified, and the interrelationship among these aspects is discussed by Randall and Cote (1991). While commitment is a substantial enough topic to warrant its own chapter, it is clear that commitment plays an important role in employee motivation.

Several studies have examined the consequences and antecedents of commitment in hospitality workers. Murray, Gregoire and Downey (1990) surveyed 186 managers at pizza restaurants. They found that these managers' affective commitment to the organization predicted their self-reported job involvement, service orientation, and intention to quit. You (1998) drew on psychological turnover theory, which states that satisfaction affects commitment which affects turnover intentions. They surveyed 84 US hotel employees and 179 Korean hotel employees. They found that satisfaction was more predictive of turnover intentions for US employees than for Korean employees, and they attribute the difference to perceptions of alternative job opportunities. Overall, they found several differences between the two samples in the key factors that drive commitment and turnover intentions. Susskind, Borchgrevink, Kacmar and Brymer (2000) surveyed 386 employees in hospitality and nonhospitality settings. They found that perceived organizational support affected employee commitment and satisfaction, which were interrelated, and which in turn affected turnover intentions. Simons and Walsh (2001) examined the relative impact of satisfaction and commitment in a sample of 7,409 employees at 84 hotels. They found that both constructs predict turnover intentions and actual hotel employee turnover rates, but that commitment was more predictive of discretionary service behavior and guest satisfaction levels. In sum, there is considerable evidence for the link between employee commitment and turnover in hospitality, and some evidence for a link between employee commitment and service quality.

Related work has explored the antecedent conditions for employee commitment, and it seeks ways in which organizations might increase the commitment level of its employees. Hawkins and Lee (1990) studied 1,100 hotel sales professionals, and found that satisfaction with several job facets were associated with organizational commitment. Further, they found that

personal demographics had little effect on these relationships. LaLopa (1997) found, in a survey of 300 resort employees, that employee commitment was associated with higher levels of customer contact — though causal direction is unclear for this study. Roehl and Swerdlow (1999) found that training administered to 190 employees at 5 hotels enhanced awareness of rules, attitudes about supervision, and morale, and that these factors in turn affected organizational commitment. Kinicki, Carson and Bohlander (1992) surveyed 876 employees from two hotels. They found that employees' perception of managerial commitment to positive HR practices affected employees' commitment to the organization and their self-reported motivation levels. Bartkus, Howell, Partent and Hartman (1997) studied 151 travel agents. They found that leadership behaviors could influence employee group cohesiveness, and that cohesiveness, in turn, was associated with employees' self-reported job commitment and motivation. Research by Simons and colleagues has shown that organizational commitment is affected by employees' justice perceptions (Simons & Roberson, 2001) and perceptions of their managers' word-action alignment or "Behavioral Integrity" (Simons & McLean Parks, 2000). Several studies, then, have explored different avenues whereby companies might be able to influence their employees' commitment levels.

While relatively few studies have directly tested the links between employee organizational commitment, employee motivation and measured organizational outcomes, the preliminary results appear extremely promising. Further empirical study of the causes and consequences of organizational commitment are warranted. Especially desirable, as with other streams of motivation research, would be studies that draw measures of antecedents and consequences from different sources — not just from employee surveys. From a practical perspective, the implication of this work is that managers would do well to track employee

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organizational commitment in addition to satisfaction on annual employee climate surveys, and should consider and track the impact of HR policies on employees' commitment levels.

Job Design and Empowerment

The final approach to motivation that will be discussed here is job design. This approach considers that the way jobs are defined — the boundaries of responsibility and authority — can motivate employees. Applications of this approach to a wide variety of work settings are reviewed by McCann and Buckner (1994). The most widely applied framework is Hackman and Oldham's (1980) Job Characteristics Theory. This model can be extended to consider empowerment efforts.

Hackman and Oldham's framework proposes that employees with high "growth need strength" will respond to job attributes in specific ways. These employees will attend to job attributes such as the skill variety demanded, the perceived importance of the job, the level of autonomy provided, the level of feedback provided, and the opportunity to interact with others to yield perceptions of job meaningfulness, responsibility, and the knowledge of results. These three perceptions, in turn, are expected to drive employee motivation and satisfaction — again, especially for employees with high growth need strength. A substantial body of empirical research on the job characteristics model has largely supported it, although there are disagreements about the precise number of job dimensions (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999).

The only located hospitality research that applies this work is done by Lee-Ross and colleagues (Lee-Ross, 1998a, 1998b; Lee-Ross & Johns, 1995). These studies, which seem to draw on a single sample of 163 UK seasonal hotel workers, found support for Hackman and Oldham's factor structure but found that growth need strength did not moderate relationships

with attitudinal outcomes. Lee-Ross (1998a) suggests that this pattern may be due to overall low scores of growth need strength reported by this employee group.

Given the relevance of this work to the widespread empowerment movement in hospitality, the impact of job characteristics certainly warrants additional research. Lee-Ross' results should be replicated with a substantially broader sample of hospitality employees, the role of growth need strength and/or other moderators should be explored, and the distribution of growth need strength across national cultures, career stages and career paths needs to be charted. In addition, possibilities of curvilinear relationships that suggest optimal levels, for example, of discretion, need to be examined (Mitchell, 1997). The Job Characteristics Model offers useful practical tools. However, the fact that growth need strength moderates the positive attitudinal outcomes means that some employee groups are likely to have aversive responses to management efforts to enrich jobs. This effect has been observed and documented (Champoux, 1991) and may be especially relevant for some hospitality employees.

Summary

Hospitality motivation research has, through the 90's, been dominated by studies of workers' self-reported needs. As a discipline, we need to broaden our approach to be better informed by the larger body of managerial research. Such increased breadth will serve the development of our knowledge and the practical recommendations we can confidently make to managers. Key areas of promise that have received relatively little attention include applications of goal-setting, at both the individual and the group level, organizational behavior modification and gainsharing, and job characteristics. Employee fairness perceptions and behavioral integrity are two more relatively unexamined issues that appear to have profound consequences in

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hospitality. Scholars can benefit from breaking new ground in these areas, and managers can benefit from thoughtful applications of their principles.

In studying these areas, a few methodological pointers need to be bom in mind. Interventions represent an exciting way to combine service to companies with research missions. However, such interventions need to be carefully structured and measured to be useful as scholarly research. Detailed suggestions about how to conduct intervention studies in the field may be found in Cook and Campbell (1979). Survey research represents the most effective tool for assessing psychological states and perceptions. However, survey research is most informative when the survey data is linked with interventions and with outcome data collected from other sources.

From a theory-development standpoint, a few more suggestions emerge: First, that hospitality scholars should take care to draw on the substantial research that has been done outside the hospitality industry. Second, in developing applications of various motivation theories, we should allow our thinking to be informed by work in other motivation schools and other disciplines altogether. For example, hospitality applications of the Job Characteristics Model can intelligently be informed by the substantial work on workers' self- reported motivating factors (as reported here) and cultural differences (e.g. Hofstede, 2001) to suggest the distribution of growth need strength.

Hospitality research on motivation is vital for understanding and practical for management. Several interesting and potent managerial tools have been developed in other industries, but many have not been well-tested in our own, sometimes unique, context. Scholars can respond to this challenge by exploring the promising and under-explored areas described

here. Managers can respond by broadening their vision of possible performance management interventions to consider some of the promising new imports.

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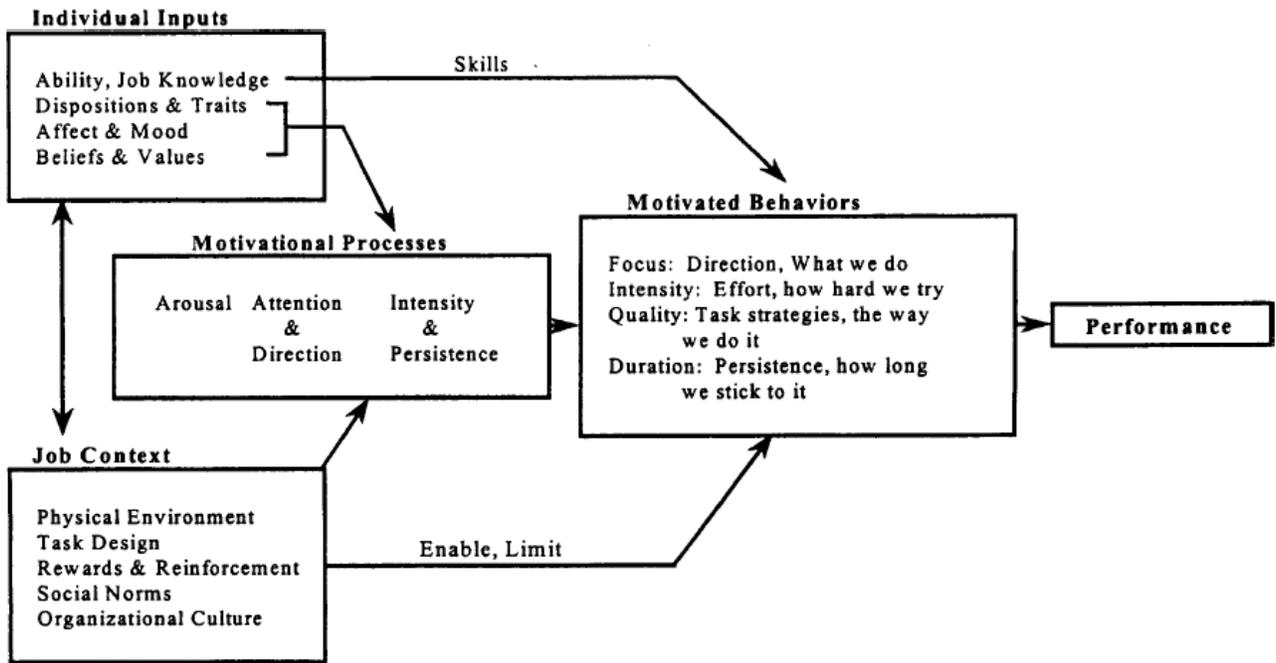
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Individual Inputs

Ability, Job Knowledge
Dispositions & Traits
Affect & Mood
Beliefs & Values

Skills

Motivational Processes

Arousal Attention   Intensity
              &   &
         Direction   Persistence

Motivated Behaviors

Focus: Direction, What we do
Intensity: Effort, how hard we try
Quality: Task strategies, the way
          we do it
Duration: Persistence, how long
           we stick to it

Performance

Job Context

Physical Environment
Task Design
Rewards & Reinforcement
Social Norms
Organizational Culture

Enable, Limit

Source: Mitchell (1997).

Figure 1: Motivation in Context of Individual Inputs, Job Context, and Performance.