

EFFECT OF MOTIVATION AND HYGIENE FACTORS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF SANFU OUTDOOR PRODUCTS CO., LTD.

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Abstract

This research aimed to study the effects of motivation factors and hygiene factors on employee performance at Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd. The population of the study comprised 611 employees working at Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd. The sample size was determined using the rule of thumb of 20 times the number of observed variables. With a total of 15 observed variables included in the study, the appropriate sample size was calculated to be 300 participants. The samples were selected using a convenience sampling method. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine relationships among variables. The results indicated that both motivation factors (including achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, and advancement) and hygiene factors (including company policy and administration, supervision, relationship with supervisors, peers, and subordinates, working condition, salary, personal life, and job security) had a statistically significant effect on employee performance at the .000 level, with a predictive power of 74.4% ($R^2 = 0.744$). Among these, hygiene factors exhibited the most significant influence on performance, followed by motivation factors. These findings highlight the critical role of both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in enhancing employee performance within the organization.

Keywords: Motivation Factors, Hygiene Factors, Employee Performance

Introduction

Currently, every organization seeks to maximize employee performance, as it is crucial to organizational success. This has led companies to establish effective strategies to increase productivity, job satisfaction, and employee engagement (Robbins & Judge, 2020). Among these strategies, motivation factors and hygiene factors play a critical role in influencing employee performance (Noe et al., 2017).

When considering motivation concepts and theories, it is evident that they are fundamental to understanding human behavior in the workplace. They play an important role in determining employees' attitudes and performance within organizations (Deci & Ryan, 2015). Motivation theories, such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Vroom's Expectancy Theory, provide valuable insights into employees' diverse motivational needs (Herzberg, 1959). Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, in particular, distinguishes between motivation factors—such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility—that drive employee satisfaction and hygiene factors—such as salary, work conditions, and company policies—that prevent dissatisfaction. The combination of motivational and hygiene factors requires a comprehensive examination of how both intrinsic and extrinsic factors contribute to employee performance (Milkovich, Newman, & Gerhart, 2017).

While motivational factors encourage employees to perform at higher levels, hygiene factors are essential prerequisites that prevent workplace dissatisfaction. Therefore, organizations must carefully manage both aspects to create an optimal work environment. Neglecting hygiene factors can lead to dissatisfaction and reduced morale, even if motivation factors are present (Gerhart & Fang, 2015). Understanding the impact of motivation and hygiene factors on employee performance is important for several reasons. Specifically, it can improve human resource management practices, thereby promoting greater employee motivation and productivity. By identifying specific motivational needs and preferences of employees, companies can effectively tailor strategies to meet these needs, thereby increasing job satisfaction and reducing turnover rates (Latham & Locke, 2019). Additionally, addressing both motivation and hygiene factors contributes to organizational sustainability and industrial growth (Pfeffer, 2018). Although there is extensive literature on motivation and hygiene factors, there remains a significant research gap in understanding how these factors impact employee performance in the sports product manufacturing sector. Most existing studies focus on the service industry or large multinational companies (Judge et al., 2017).

Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd., established in 1997, is a leading manufacturer of outdoor sports products in China. Originating from a small 30-square-meter shop near the east gate of Peking University, the company has expanded rapidly under the philosophy of honest operation and guaranteed after-sales service. It was officially listed on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange's SME Board on December 9, 2015 (Shenzhen Stock Exchange, 2015). Since its listing, the company has continually reformed its original business, integrating products and services to offer consumers diverse options while promoting outdoor activities and a

lifestyle in harmony with nature. Moreover, the unique challenges and opportunities this company faces, such as seasonal demand fluctuations and the need for specialized skills, necessitate an approach tailored to motivational and hygiene factors. To implement such an approach, it should enable a more balanced and sustainable pattern of employee engagement and performance. This will lead to improved organizational outcomes, including increased productivity, higher employee morale, and enhanced competitive advantage (Salsabil & Cahyo, 2023). Therefore, the researcher recognizes the importance of studying the "Effect of motivation factors and hygiene factors on employee performance of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd." Understanding the significant impacts of both factors will be beneficial for entrepreneurs and can be used to improve the company's human resource management practices. This will contribute to the company's success and competitive advantage through effective human capital management.

Research Objectives

1. To study the effect of motivation factors on employee performance of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd.
2. To study the effect of hygiene factors on the employee performance of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd.

Research Hypothesis

- H1: Motivation factors influence employee performance of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd.
 H2: Hygiene factors influence employee performance of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd.

Research Framework

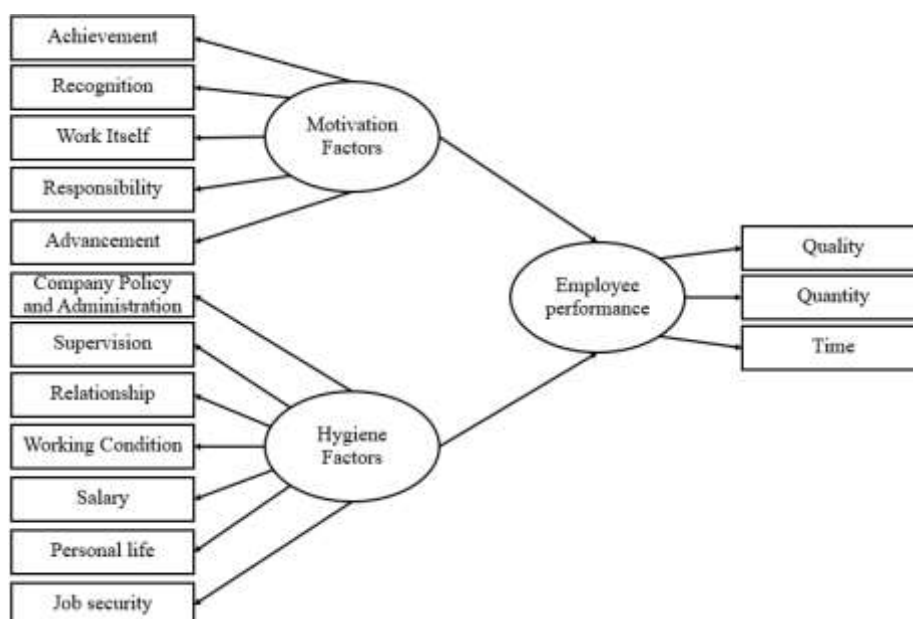


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Literature Review

Concepts and theories related to Motivation Factors

Motivation is described as a process that stimulates individuals through a drive, which pushes them to set a direction to express consistent behavior that will enable them to achieve their intended goals (Dhaliwal, 2016). Uka and Prendi (2021) defined motivation factors as factors directly related to work that motivate people to like and love their job. They stimulate satisfaction for individuals in the organization to perform more efficiently because these factors can respond to the internal needs of individuals. The "Two-Factor Theory" is based on Herzberg's (1959) research study, which involved interviewing over 200 accountants and engineers from 11 industrial plants in Pittsburgh about their work. The conclusion was that there are two types of factors related to employees' feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. One dimension consists of elements that can be both causes of dissatisfaction and can prevent dissatisfaction. Herzberg called these elements Hygiene Factors. These are external factors (Extrinsic Factors) related to the work environment. The other dimension consists of motivational factors (Motivational Factors).

The motivational factors, which are intrinsic to the nature of work and are directly associated with increased job satisfaction and improved performance, consist of the following observed variables: Achievement (MF1), which refers to the sense of accomplishment from completing tasks effectively; Recognition (MF2), which reflects appreciation and acknowledgment from others; Work Itself (MF3), representing the nature and meaningfulness of the job tasks; Responsibility (MF4), which indicates the level of autonomy and control over one's work; and Advancement (MF5), which refers to opportunities for career progression and development.

On the other hand, the hygiene factors, which are extrinsic and pertain to the work environment, serve to prevent dissatisfaction but do not inherently promote satisfaction or performance. These factors include: Company Policy and Administration (HF1), referring to organizational regulations and fairness; Supervision (HF2), indicating the quality of managerial oversight; Relationship with Supervisors, Peers, and Subordinates (HF3), capturing interpersonal interactions in the workplace; Working Conditions (HF4), which address the physical and environmental aspects of the job setting; Salary (HF5), referring to compensation and financial rewards; Personal Life (HF6), which concerns the balance between work responsibilities and personal affairs; and Job Security (HF7), representing the perceived stability and future certainty of one's employment.

Concepts and theories related to Employee Performance

Employee Performance refers to the productive behavior of personnel in an organization. It is an output related to positive feelings, goals, work environment, and good teamwork and colleagues (Siddiqui, 2014). It depends on the organizational culture that determines the results of each individual employee, stemming from special focus and effort

that are indispensable, especially in the surroundings that facilitate work and the contributions of others (Nazir & Zamir, 2015). Nguyen, Yandi, and Mahaputra (2020) discussed the components of work performance, stating that three factors influence employee performance efficiency: work quantity, quality, and output. Peterson and Plowman (1989) provided a concept and summarized the components of efficiency into 4 points, including quality of work, quantity of work, time, and costs—however, cost dimensions which are inherently subjective and not easily captured through standard performance evaluation instruments.

For this study, employee performance is assessed using three observed variables that are theoretically grounded and empirically measurable: Quality (Y1), which refers to the accuracy, thoroughness, and reliability of work outcomes; Quantity (Y2), which pertains to the volume of tasks or services completed within a specific time frame; and Time (Y3), which measures adherence to deadlines and efficiency in task completion.

Based on the synthesized literature, motivation and hygiene factors are foundational elements influencing employees' behavior and performance within an organization. Motivation factors, which relate to intrinsic elements such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility, play a vital role in enhancing employees' internal drive to perform at higher levels. Meanwhile, hygiene factors, which are associated with extrinsic conditions such as company policies, supervision, and working conditions, help create a supportive environment that minimizes dissatisfaction and sustains performance stability. Together, these factors shape the overall work experience and directly impact employees' productivity and efficiency. Therefore, to explore these relationships in the context of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd., the following research hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Motivation factors influence employee performance of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd.

H2: Hygiene factors influence employee performance of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd.

Research Methodology

1. Population and Sample: The population of this research consisted of employees of Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd., totaling 611 individuals. The sample size was calculated using the method recommended by Hair et al. (2010), which suggests that an appropriate sample size should be approximately 20 times the number of observed variables in the model. Given 15 observed variables in this study, the corresponding sample size was 300 participants. A non-probability sampling technique, specifically convenience sampling, was employed to select participants. Although this method may introduce sampling bias, as not all individuals in the population had an equal opportunity to be included, it was appropriate given the constraints of limited research time and accessibility. In the Chinese context, online questionnaires distributed through mobile applications and chat groups are commonly used and allow for efficient data collection despite certain limitations in the representativeness of the sample.

2. Research Instruments: The primary instrument used in this research was a structured questionnaire, developed based on an extensive review of relevant concepts and theories. The questionnaire was designed specifically for this study and was divided into four parts. Part 1 consisted of general demographic information, including six items: gender, age, marital status, education level, work experience, and income. Parts 2 to 4 utilized a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' agreement with various statements. Part 2 comprised 20 items related to motivation factors. An example item is: "My job allows me to achieve personal and professional goals." Part 3 contained 28 items focused on hygiene factors. An example item is: "The company's policies are fair and transparent to all employees." Part 4 included 12 items measuring employee performance. An example item is: "The work I produce consistently meets or exceeds the required standards." To ensure the content validity of the questionnaire, the researcher conducted an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) assessment with three experts in the field. Following revisions based on expert feedback, the instrument was pilot-tested with 30 respondents who were similar to members of the target sample. The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with values ranging from .796 to .928, indicating acceptable internal consistency; coefficients exceeding .70 are generally considered reliable in social science research.

3. Data Analysis: Descriptive statistical analysis was used to summarize the basic characteristics of the sample group through frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Inferential statistical analysis was conducted to test the research hypotheses using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM was selected due to its suitability for complex models with multiple constructs and observed variables, as well as its ability to handle small to medium sample sizes and non-normal data distributions.

Results

1. General Analysis of Respondent Data

Most respondents were female, totaling 155 individuals (54.67%). Most respondents were aged 41–50 years (105; 35.00%). Regarding marital status, 216 respondents (72.00%) were married or living together. In terms of educational attainment, 190 individuals (63.33%) held qualifications lower than a bachelor's degree. The most common work experience range was 3-5 years, reported by 134 individuals (44.67%). Additionally, the most frequently reported monthly income range was 6,001-8,000 CNY, reported by 151 individuals (50.33%).

2. The Analysis of Motivation Factors, Hygiene Factors, and Employee Performance

The interpretation of the mean scores in this study follows the interval scale classification based on an .80 range, where a mean score between 3.41 and 4.20 is considered a high level of opinion. The details of these findings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 The overall mean and standard deviation

Factors	\bar{X}	SD	Level of opinion
Motivation Factors			
- Achievement (MF1)	3.93	0.65	High
- Recognition (MF2)	3.66	0.71	High
- Work Itself (MF3)	3.67	0.74	High
- Responsibility (MF4)	3.75	0.70	High
- Advancement (MF5)	3.42	0.86	High
Hygiene Factors			
- Company Policy and Administration (HF1)	3.75	0.76	High
- Supervision (HF2)	3.72	0.75	High
- Relationship with Supervisors, Peers, and Subordinates (HF3)	3.98	0.74	High
- Working Condition (HF4)	3.71	0.85	High
- Salary (HF5)	3.79	0.77	High
- Personal life (HF6)	3.80	0.73	High
- Job security (HF7)	3.70	0.76	High
Employee performance			
- Quality (Y1)	3.61	0.84	High
- Quantity (Y2)	3.51	0.78	High
- Time (Y3)	3.68	0.79	High
Total	3.60	0.75	High

3. Hypothesis Testing Results

The model demonstrated acceptable fit, as all observed variables had factor loadings greater than 0.5, indicating strong indicator reliability. Internal consistency reliability was confirmed, with Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (ρ_A), Jöreskog's rho (ρ_C), and Cronbach's alpha (α) all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.7. Convergent validity was established through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranging from .682 to .836, all above the .5 benchmark. Additionally, discriminant validity was confirmed, as the square roots of the AVEs for each latent construct exceeded the correlations among constructs, with inter-construct correlations ranging from .563 to .728, supporting the model's distinctiveness and measurement adequacy.

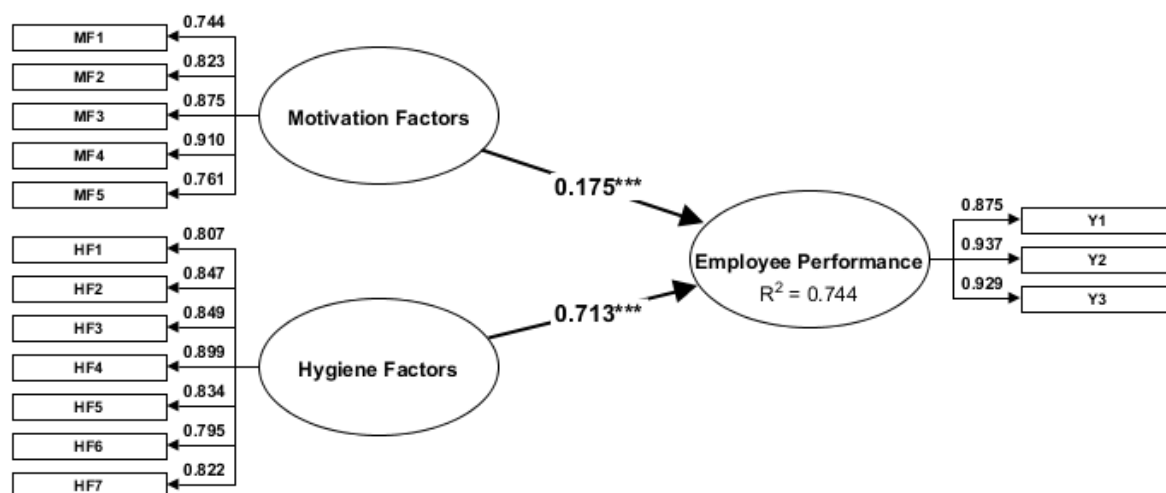


Figure 2 Shows the results of hypothesis testing

Table 2 The results of hypothesis testing

Factors	Employee Performance			
	Beta	t-test	p-value	Cohen's F ²
- Motivation Factors	.175	3.555	.000***	0.040
- Hygiene Factors	.713	13.952	.000***	0.656

*** Statistical significance at .001 level

Table 2 shows that Motivation Factors (Beta = .175, t-test = 3.555, p-Value = .000) and Hygiene Factors (Beta = .713, t-test = 13.952, p-Value = .000) significantly influenced employee performance at Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd. at the .000 significance level. The model demonstrated a predictive power of 74.4% ($R^2 = 0.744$).

Conclusions and Discussion

Firstly, Hygiene factors significantly influence employee performance at Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd., particularly by fostering a stable and supportive work environment that mitigates dissatisfaction. The highest satisfaction scores were observed in interpersonal relationships with supervisors, peers, and subordinates, indicating that social cohesion plays a crucial role in sustaining performance (Blau, 1964; Nguyen, 2020). Supervisory support also scored highly, especially regarding clarity of feedback and approachability, aligning with the principles of transformational leadership, which emphasize the importance of supportive leadership in enhancing job performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Kim & Beehr, 2021). Company policies and administrative processes were generally well received, particularly with respect to operational support; however, lower agreement on

fairness and transparency indicates a need for improved policy communication and consistency (Chen et al., 2021). Working conditions were perceived positively, although concerns regarding workload balance emerged, consistent with findings that while physical conditions enhance satisfaction, excessive workload can lead to burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Salary and work-life balance, though moderately rated, revealed disparities between perceived industry competitiveness and actual financial satisfaction, consistent with equity theory (Adams, 1965; Ali & Ahmed, 2019). Finally, job security received the lowest mean score, reflecting concerns over long-term career stability and progression—an issue long associated with diminished motivation and retention (Cheng & Chan, 2008; Jiang & Lavaysse, 2018).

Secondly, Motivation factors also had a strong and direct impact on employee performance, with achievement, responsibility, meaningful work, and recognition emerging as key drivers of intrinsic motivation. Achievement was the most highly rated factor, reflecting employees' satisfaction with challenging work and goal attainment, which supports Self-Determination Theory's assertion that feelings of competence enhance motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Gopalan et al., 2017). Responsibility also scored highly, with many employees expressing appreciation for autonomy in decision-making, consistent with Job Characteristics Theory, which emphasizes the role of task ownership in performance outcomes (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Morgeson et al., 2019). The work itself was considered fulfilling, reinforcing Herzberg's proposition that the nature of the job can be a powerful motivator when aligned with employee values (Herzberg, 1968; Steger et al., 2012). Recognition was perceived positively overall, yet the lower rating for individual acknowledgment indicates the need for more personalized incentives to maximize impact (Vroom, 1964; Neves & Eisenberger, 2014). The least impactful motivational factor was advancement, indicating a gap in perceived career growth and promotion pathways, which research has shown to be critical for long-term engagement and retention (Arnold, 2018; Kwon & Rupp, 2021).

Lastly, the study confirms that both hygiene and motivation factors are essential to enhancing employee performance at Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd., albeit through different mechanisms. Hygiene factors such as interpersonal relationships, working conditions, and supervision primarily function to prevent dissatisfaction and support a conducive work environment (Herzberg, 1968; Hanaysha, 2016), while motivation factors—especially achievement, responsibility, and meaningful work—serve as internal drivers of high performance and long-term engagement (Amabile & Kramer, 2011; Alshmemri et al., 2017). The interplay of these factors reinforces the applicability of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory in the manufacturing context. Nevertheless, areas of concern such as job security, workload management, and career advancement highlight the need for targeted organizational improvements. Organizations that proactively strengthen both sets of factors are more likely

to achieve sustained workforce satisfaction, productivity, and retention (Huang et al., 2020; Ng et al., 2005; Tharenou, 2019).

Recommendations

Recommendations for Hygiene Factors

Sanfu Outdoor Products Co., Ltd. should focus on enhancing a fair and supportive work environment to reduce dissatisfaction. Key actions include reviewing and communicating company policies with transparency, establishing an anonymous feedback system, and implementing leadership development programs to strengthen supervision and conflict management. To improve workplace relationships, team-building activities, mentorship schemes, and regular town hall meetings should be adopted. Physical working conditions must be routinely assessed, and workloads must be managed to prevent burnout. The company should also benchmark salaries against industry standards, adopt transparent compensation policies, and ensure job security through defined career pathways and employee benefit programs. Initiatives promoting work-life balance, such as flexible hours and wellness programs, are also recommended.

Recommendations for Motivation Factors

To foster intrinsic motivation, the company should design meaningful, goal-oriented job roles and implement recognition systems that reward achievements through both financial and non-financial incentives, including peer-based recognition. Employees' roles should align with their skills and goals, supported by job rotation and enrichment programs. Encouraging autonomy and recognizing accountability will help enhance responsibility. To support advancement, the company should create a clear promotion framework, offer training and mentorship, and prioritize internal promotions to strengthen long-term engagement.

Recommendations for Employee Performance

To evaluate and enhance employee performance, the company should integrate performance measurement systems aligned with organizational goals and employee development initiatives. Establishing clear Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will enable the organization to track progress and adjust policies accordingly. Relevant KPIs may include employee satisfaction scores, retention rates, turnover reduction, internal survey results, promotion rates, training program participation, performance appraisal scores, and employee engagement index results. Monitoring these metrics will support evidence-based decision-making and continuous improvement in both individual and organizational performance.

Future research

First, future research should incorporate qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and case studies, to gain deeper insights into employees' perceptions of hygiene and motivational factors. While quantitative surveys provide

generalizable findings, qualitative research can uncover underlying psychological and behavioral motivations that influence employee performance. This approach would enable a more nuanced understanding of how employees interpret and experience motivational factors within their specific organizational and cultural contexts.

Secondly, future research should examine the interplay of other psychological, organizational, and environmental factors that may impact employee performance. Variables such as organizational culture, leadership styles, emotional intelligence, job autonomy, and psychological well-being should be investigated to determine their role in employee motivation. This would provide a more comprehensive framework for understanding workplace dynamics beyond Herzberg's traditional categorization.

Lastly, future research design should be utilized to assess the long-term effects of hygiene and motivation factors on employee performance over time. This would allow researchers to examine whether motivational factors vary across career stages and how external factors, such as economic changes, job market trends, or organizational restructuring, affect employee satisfaction and performance. Studying motivation and hygiene factors over an extended period would yield more accurate insights into their stability and evolution in the workplace.

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