

Work Motivation in Public vs Private Sector Case Study of Department of Highway Thailand

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— *Review of* —
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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to compare job expectation and work motivation between the workers in public and private sectors by using Department of Highways, Ministry of Transport, as the case study. This study conducts through five focus groups interview of temporary workers, three groups of temporary workers in public sector and two in private sector. Research has shown that temporary employees of the public sector would expect that they will be hired as an employee of the State, while private sector employees are satisfied with their wage and bonus. Motivations to work in government unit are benefits, welfares, and the care for life after retirement. Additionally, most temporary employees want to have better career path, good environment, and greater security of the family.

Keywords: Work Motivation, Public Sector, Private Sector

1. Introduction

Production process is the process that brings inputs into the production environment consisting of money, materials, equipment, and people. Human are creatures of consciousness, intelligence, and ability to manage other production resources effectively. Therefore, human capital is the most valuable and important input in modern economic theory. However, work force must be satisfied at work and must have a need or desire for achievement. So they can be stimulated behavior and performance to put more forth effort into the success. Supervisors are directly responsible for motivating their subordinates to make a progress of their work. Employees of the public sector receive different wage, welfare, stability, and work security from private sector employees. Thus, employees of these two work sectors may have different expectations from of their work place.

Therefore, management of both public and private sectors need to learn how to create incentives for employees in order to ensure security and safety on the job according to the expectations of employee.

In terms of public sector, management must create work motivation to attract work force in order to make them feel willing to dedicate a loyal work for government agency as they are a part of the organization even though they received less compensation and benefits than other working for private sectors. Moreover, if management can create or motivate the work force to satisfy their work employee, then will have an engagement and commitment to their work, which will create a better organizational productivity and sustainability effectively.

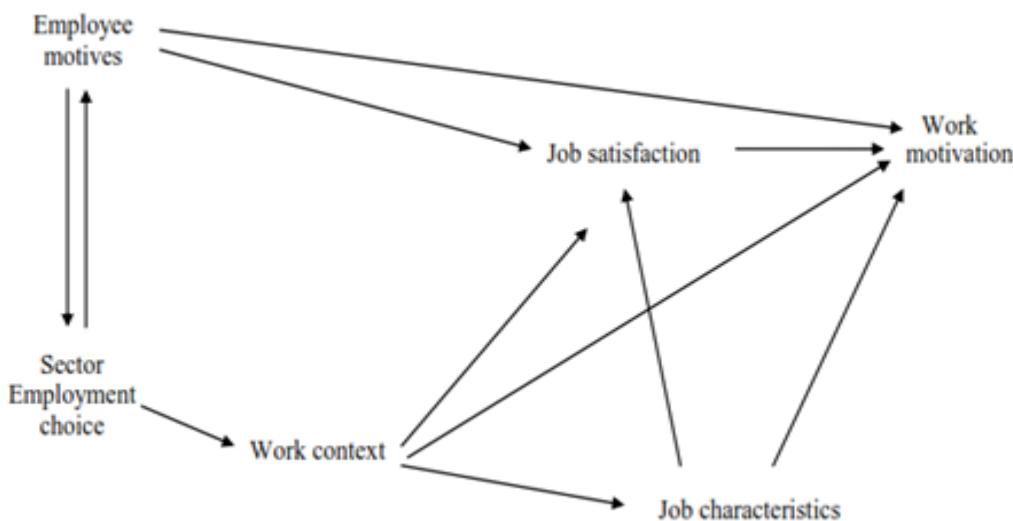
Research Objective

To compare job expectation and work motivation of workers in public and private sectors by using Department of Highways, Ministry of Transport, as the case study.

2. Conceptual Framework

In a recent article, Bradley E. Wright (2001) was only focused on public-sector work motivation. The study emphasizes on sector employment choice, employee motives, job satisfaction, job characteristics, and work context. The research aims to determine the extent of employee's expectation and satisfaction toward organization setting such as organization's reward systems, procedural constraints, goal content, and goal commitment.

Public-Sector Model of Work Motivation

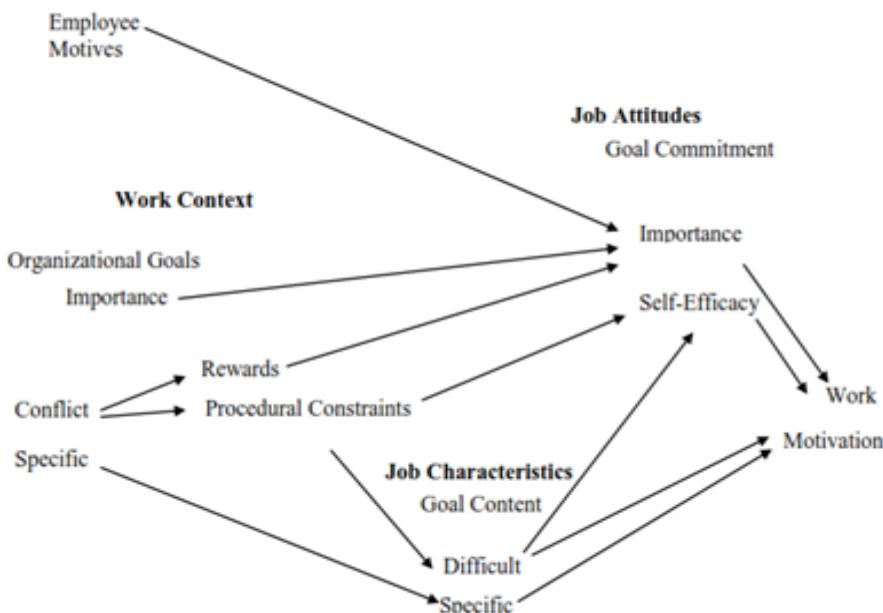


Source: Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory in Bradley E. Wright (2001)

Bradley E. Wright has assumed these two hypotheses in his previous study; (1) The characteristics of the public sector employee or work environment are different from the private sector. (2) There are differences of work motivation between public and private sector. The basic requirement of the employee and the complexity of public sector management caused the difference of work motivation between public sector and private sector, which aimed to generate profit organization.

Therefore, public-sector work motivation could be established by firstly creating employee's attitude. Then, evoke job satisfaction by building incentive systems, reward preferences, work value creation, appropriate management structure, and superb relationship.

Revised Public-Sector Model of Work Motivation



Source: Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory in Bradley E. Wright (2001)

The primary goal in modern management concept is to create work motivation through work context, job characteristic, organization goals, conflict deduction, efficiency work practice, reward and incentive, job satisfaction, and good attitude toward workplace. Furthermore, executives need to bring out the talents of employees to accomplish their work.

A new model of public-sector work motivation was designed using psychological theory to encourage the motivation to work by rewarding and building good relationship among colleagues.

A comparative study of motivation in the work of public sector employees with private sector employees toward behavior, attitudes, and compensation (Carole L. Jurkiewicz, 1998).

This study collected data over 50 years in both the public and private sector employees, the management and operation employees. The findings of 1,000 private sectors managements shown the need of employees in the following;

1. Good wage (5th)
2. Job security(4th)
3. Promotion and growth in the organization(6th)
4. Good working conditions(7th)
5. Interesting work(1st)
6. Personal loyalty to employees(8th)
7. Tactful discipline(9th)
8. Full appreciation of work done(2nd)
9. Sympathetic help with personal problems(10TH)
10. Feeling of being in on things(3rd)

Subsequently, a theoretical framework and questionnaires were constructed based on the finding of private-sector manager needs. The samples for the study consisted of 296 public sector employees and 333 private sector employees. Public sector employees who work as firefighters, office staffs and other positions, included 98 persons in supervisor level and 198 persons in operation level. Private sector employees who work in communication, marketing, human resource, accounting and customer relation to the center of USA, included 194 persons in supervisor level and 139 persons in operation level.

The questionnaire consisted of these fifteen work-related motivation factors;

- A stable and secure future
- Chance to benefit society
- Chance to learn new things
- Chance to engage in satisfying leisure activities (e.g., recreational, cultural)
- Chance to exercise leaderships
- Chance to use my special abilities
- Chance to make a contribution to important decisions
- Freedom from supervision
- Freedom from the pressures to conform both on and off the job
- Friendly and congenial associates
- High prestige and social status
- High salary
- Opportunity for advancement
- Variety in work assignments
- Working as part of a team

The findings of Buelens & Van Den Broeck, (2007) shown the differences of work motivation between public and private sector organizations. Data was collected from 3,314 private organizations and 409 public organizations in Belgium. The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H1: Public sector employees are less motivated by external factors as monetary rewards than private sector employees.

H2: Public sector employees are more motivated by internal factors, such as responsibility and self-development than private sector employees.,

H3: Public sector employees are more motivated by a supportive working environment than private sector employees,

H4: Public sector employees report fewer working hours and fewer willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization than private sector employees.

H5 : Hierarchical level is at least as important as differences in the sector of employment in explaining motivational differences.

H6 : Sector of employment is more important than demographic data such as gender, age, or education in explaining motivational differences.

H7: Public sector workers experience less work – family conflict less than private sector employees

The result of the study shown that public sector using similar motivation method, but it can create less work expectations and motivation to employees fewer than private sector. Nevertheless, the modern innovation management of government agency will similarly perform with private agency by providing more roles and opportunities for employees to

participate in the management of organization. Thus, it will create more work motivation to the public sector employee.

3. Research Process

This research is to compare job expectation and work motivation of workers in public and private sectors that work at construction site. The researcher used qualitative research methods in the primary state. Focus group interview were conducted by using 40 sample size divided into five groups. Group 1-3, twenty-four state employees in highway maintenance unit from Hua-Hin, Cha-Um and Nakornpathom1 divided into three groups eight person for each. Group 4, for state employees in the highway maintenance unit from Bang-Sapan and four contract worker from private employees (Nakornchai Engineering) were mixed into the same group. Lastly, group 5, for state employees in the highway maintenance unit from Samutsongkram and four contract worker from private employees (Siripaiboonpattana) were mixed into the same group.

These following questions were used as a research tool in focus group interview.

1. Do your earnings cover your family expenses?
2. What does your employer provides benefits? (monetary / non-monetary).
3. What is your expectation from your work place? (motivation/support)
4. What are your reasons of making a choice to work with private/public sector?
5. Do you satisfy with your work and organization such as organization structure, management policy, job stability, work security and safety, and work environment?

4. Research Finding

The result of the focus group interviews of public sector employee who works for highway maintenance units and private sector employee who work as a contract worker of highway maintenance unite can be summarized as follows:

Table 1 Key Findings from the focus groups

Public Sector	Private Sector
Compensation Fixed rate with 377.85 bath/day	Compensation Initial rate at 300 baht/day and increase after probation, depending on ability
Welfare Sick leave, personal leave and vocational leave.	Welfare Sick leave, personal leave, vocational leave and other welfare depending on employers
Expectation Social Security, State-government employee transformation, Pension Fund	Expectation Increased revenue, Bonus, Promoted to higher position, Shareholding

Public Sector	Private Sector
<p>Sector Employment Choice Stability</p> <p>Management Structure Highway Engineer</p> <pre> graph TD HighwayEngineer[Highway Engineer] --- Mowers[Mowers] HighwayEngineer --- UrgentRepair[Urgent Repair] HighwayEngineer --- Maintenance[Maintenance] HighwayEngineer --- Equipment[Equipment] HighwayEngineer --- Safety[Safety] </pre> <p>Job Stability Job stability</p> <p>Job Security Work security and safety</p> <p>Work Environment Work-life balance between work and family.</p>	<p>Sector Employment Choice Higher income</p> <p>Management Structure Foreman</p> <pre> graph TD Foreman[Foreman] --- Carpenter[Carpenter] Foreman --- Plasterer[Plasterer] Foreman --- Wrights[Wrights] Foreman --- semiSkilled[semi-skilled workers] </pre> <p>Job Stability Higher income and incentive</p> <p>Job Security Work security and safety</p> <p>Work Environment Work-life balance between work and family.</p>

5. Conclusion & Recommendation

Conclusion

Results from the focus group concluded that the expectation and motivation of public sector employees include higher compensation, welfare of sick leave personal leave and vacation leave, social security, state-government employee transformation, and pension fund. While the expectation and motivation of private sector employees include higher compensation, extra bonus, social security, group accident insurance, career path progression, good working environment, friendly colleagues and well balanced of work-family life.

Recommendation

Compensation is a motivation to improve life's quality of employees. The researcher will make a further study by using expectation information from focus group. The research will conduct as a quantitative survey from both public and private sector employee who working in the highway maintenance unit. After the findings, research will construct an employee motivated model for those who are interested to apply to the management of the organization.

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