

CAUSAL EFFECT OF MOTIVATION FACTORS ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: CASE STUDY OF SINOPEC SHANGHAI BRANCH AND SHANGHAI FREE TRADE ZONE MANAGEMENT CO., LTD.

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to study the motivational and hygiene factors affecting the organizational commitment of employees at Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd. The study consists of sample of 320 employees from Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd. Data collection was carried out through the administration of a questionnaire, employing a convenience sampling method. Data analysis utilized Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that both motivation and hygiene factors have a significant direct effect on the organizational commitment of employees at Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd., with statistical significance at the 0.05 level and a predictive power of 89.1 percent.

Keywords: Motivational Factors, Hygiene Factors, Organizational Commitment

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INTRODUCTION

Talented employees are pivotal in establishing an organization's core competitive advantage. They exhibit outstanding professionalism, extensive experience in specific tasks, expertise, and essential skills, all of which play a critical role in the organization's development. Replacing such employees can be challenging. When these employees depart, the organization faces the substantial task of recruiting and replacing them, resulting in a significant loss for the organization (Laszlo & Zhexembayeva, 2017). Presently, the employee turnover rate in Chinese companies has surpassed the acceptable range of 20% to 30%. Employees serve as pivotal drivers of business operations. Their departure can inflict irreparable damage to business development and have a profound impact on short-term operations (Kao, Huang & Cheng, 2016). Therefore, organizations should take action to enhance the stability of the organization. Employee turnover can have a detrimental impact on the organization's stability, particularly when key employees or talented personnel are lost, which can disrupt the normal operations of the organization. If a significant number of employees leave, the business may struggle to operate smoothly (Zhang, 2016). Furthermore, employee turnover can place psychological pressure on the remaining employees. This situation necessitates that the remaining employees shoulder additional responsibilities left by departing colleagues. This, in turn, can negatively impact employee morale, directly harming the organization (Azharudeen & Andrew, 2018). Additionally, the company must recruit new employees, incurring expenses related to training, recruitment, and more. New employees who are unfamiliar with the work and organizational culture may generate hidden costs for the business, increasing the burden on the organization (Zhu, Seaver, Sawhney, Ji, Holt, Sanil & Upreti, 2017).

Moreover, simply motivating employees to work harder does not necessarily enhance employee loyalty. In the long run, employees may still leave because motivation alone cannot address the growing desire to remain with the organization. Therefore, organizational commitment is a crucial factor that can boost employee loyalty and encourage them to stay with the organization (Santoso, Sitompul & Budiartanto, 2018). Hence, companies should not only aim to retain employees but also motivate them to stay with the organization for the long term. Simultaneously, they should focus on promoting organizational development. Shahzadi, Javed, Pirzada, Nasreen, and Khanam (2014) demonstrated in their research that effective incentives can significantly impact employee performance when employees perceive the organization as having potential. Nevertheless, it's essential for the motivation methods to be reasonable and capable of genuinely inspiring employees.

The concept and theory related to employee organizational commitment have been extensively studied in the literature. Most research has examined commitment at both individual and organizational levels, and various studies have identified a relationship between motivation and organizational commitment (Llobet & Fito, 2013; Gholizade, Masoudi, Maleki, Aeenparast, & Barzegar, 2014; Leite, Rodrigues, & Albuquerque, 2014; Ramalho Luz, Luiz de Paula, & de Oliveira, 2018). Numerous empirical studies have explored the impact of financial and non-financial incentives on organizational commitment (Rizal, Idrus, & Djumahir, 2014; Purwanto, 2020; Kumar, Mehra, Inder, & Sharma, 2016). The objective is to establish effective incentives, decrease employee turnover, and foster a sense of belonging within the organization, thereby encouraging employees to remain with the organization for an extended duration (Pinder, 2014).

In conclusion, researchers should investigate the causal relationship between motivational factors and the organizational commitment of employees at Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd. Using survey research methods involving questionnaires and empirical data analysis, the aim is to gather academic research data from both domestic and international sources to identify actionable insights. Subsequently, these insights can be utilized to develop a comprehensive compensation and incentive system for

employees. Such a system, encompassing not only salary incentives but also various forms of motivation, can instill a sense of ownership and satisfaction among employees, ultimately benefiting the company through enhanced productivity and fostering effective employee motivation policies.

Thus, this research aims to study the motivational and hygiene factors affecting the organizational commitment of employees of Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Concept and Theory of Motivation Theory

In psychological terms, motivation refers to the state of an individual being driven to exhibit behaviors aimed at achieving a specific goal. Particularly, motivation in the workplace is a crucial factor that propels individuals to pursue progress. According to Heckhausen (2013), motivation results from the disparity between desires, aspirations, and actual achievements. This can be explained as follows: When desires surpass achievements, motivation becomes positive, driving individuals to take action. In their work, Alshmemri et al. (2017) discussed two factors, drawing on Herzberg's research from 1959. They conducted interviews with over 200 accountants and engineers from 11 industrial factories in Pittsburgh. The results revealed two distinct types of factors related to employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction: Hygiene Factors and Motivational Factors. These factors have different dimensions concerning motivational issues. Hygiene Factors are elements that can cause dissatisfaction and are preventable. Herzberg referred to these elements as hygiene or maintenance factors. They are considered external factors and are closely related to the work environment. On the other hand, Motivational Factors are elements that, when present, can lead to positive attitudes and motivation. These factors are considered intrinsic to the individual.

Concept and Theory of Organizational Commitment

In research, the terms 'commitment' and 'engagement' are often used interchangeably among social contexts. However, they have distinct meanings when applied to relationships and work. Engagement generally means being involved, interested, or actively participating in a particular activity, task, or relationship. In a work context, it refers to the feeling of dedication, commitment, and enthusiasm for one's job or organization (Saks & Gruman, 2014). On the other hand, 'commitment' goes deeper and involves devotion, responsibility, and loyalty. It signifies a long-term, patient intention to devote time, effort, and resources to fulfill obligations and maintain close relationships. It encompasses feelings of loyalty, reliability, and a willingness to make sacrifices. In the context of work, commitment refers to a dedication to the organization's goals, consistently delivering high-quality work, and going above and beyond the minimum requirements (Csikszentmihalyi, 2020). Colquitt, Lepine, and Wesson (2014) have emphasized that organizational commitment is a crucial driver for efficient organizational operation. Allen and Meyer (1990) introduced the concept of organizational commitment, defining it as a sense of attachment between employees and the organization. This feeling characterizes the relationship between employees and the organization, influencing employees' decisions on whether to remain part of the organization (Wołowska, 2014). Organizational commitment comprises three dimensions: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

The relationship between Motivation Factors and Organizational Commitment

Ezenwakwelu (2017) discovered that work motivation significantly influences organizational commitment. Early motivation theories were rooted in the concept of the 'economic man,' assuming that individuals engage in economic activities rationally. However, quantitative analysis of motivation's impact has been limited, and negative aspects of motivation have been largely overlooked. Research has primarily focused on the reward perspective.

Battistelli, Galletta, Portoghese, and Vandenberghe (2013) identified reward as the most influential motivational factor, followed by development motivation, material motivation, and poverty motivation. This study suggests that companies often prioritize material motivation over other types because it effectively encourages employees to perform well and enhances organizational commitment.

Al-Madi, Assal, Shrafat, and Zeglat (2017) identified that both tangible and intangible factors influence employee motivation. Nevertheless, the need for material incentives remains a fundamental driver of employee motivation. In addition, Miao, Newman, Sun, and Xu (2013) found a significant positive correlation between motivation and commitment to the organization. Financial motivation has a considerable impact on long-term commitment, while career development motivation fulfills psychological and basic needs. Environmental motivation enhances both psychological and foundational commitment.

Ahmed, Ismail, Amin, and Ramzan (2013) conducted an observational study and identified that job diversity, work stress, leadership support, and career development impact commitment to the organization. In contrast, Giauque, Resentera, and Siggen (2014) analyzed employee retention and concluded that, in addition to demographic variables, factors related to work and organizational management influence organizational commitment. Furthermore, some scholars have highlighted the relationship between employees' commitment to the organization and variables such as job satisfaction, intention to quit, and job performance (Saeed, Waseem, Sikander, & Rizwan, 2014).

Through a review of the literature regarding the relationship between employee motivation and organizational commitment, it is evident that much of the research conducted by academics primarily focuses on problem elucidation and proposing potential solutions. This emphasis involves describing issues from a systemic perspective or offering specific problem-solving approaches. There is a noticeable scarcity of practical summaries and empirical studies validating the effectiveness of motivational strategies and commitment-building methods within organizations. As a result, three hypotheses have been formulated for this study:

H1: Motivational factors affect the organizational commitment of employees at Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd.

H2: Hygiene factors affect the organizational commitment of employees at Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd.

From the literature review, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 1.

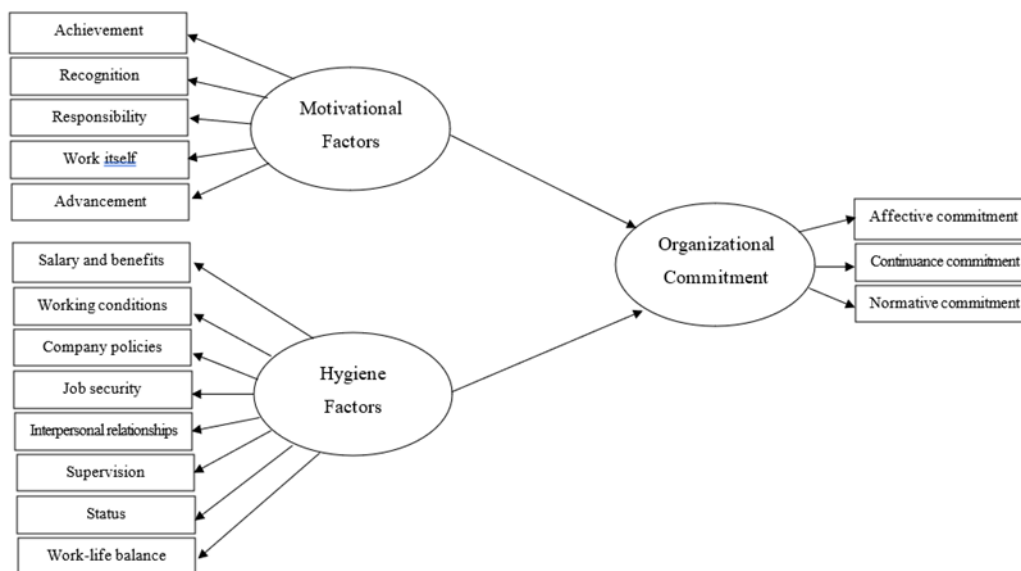


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research population comprises 526 employees from Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd. The researchers determined the precise population size using the hypothetical model equation testing approach proposed by Hair et al. (2010), which recommends a sample size 20 times the number of observable variables. In this study, there are 16 observable variables, so the required sample size is 320 employees. The researchers employed a non-probability convenience sampling method to select the sample.

The research tools used in this study include a questionnaire developed from a review of relevant theories and concepts. The questionnaire aims to collect data on motivational factors, hygiene factors, and employee organizational commitment. It comprises four sections: 1) General information, 2) Motivational factors, 3) Hygiene factors, and 4) Organizational commitment. Sections two to four use a Likert scale with ratings from 1 to 5 (1 indicating 'Strongly disagree,' and 5 indicating 'Strongly agree'). Before data collection, the questionnaire underwent item-objective congruence (IOC) and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha. The results showed an IOC of 0.67 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.971.

In this research, data analysis and hypothesis testing involved two main components: 1) Descriptive Statistics: This component entailed an initial examination of the sample group's data, presenting results as frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Descriptive statistics provided preliminary insights into the sample. 2) Inferential Statistics: Inferential statistics were employed to test research hypotheses. The study used a significance level of 0.05. The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique was utilized to test the hypotheses. PLS-SEM is a statistical analysis technique that explores complex relationships and latent structures within the research model.

RESEARCH RESULTS

1) General Information of Respondents: The majority of respondents were male (62.81 percent). Additionally, respondents fell within the 31 to 40-year age range (44.69 percent). Furthermore, participants held bachelor's degrees (52.60 percent). In terms of income, respondents reported an income range of 3,001 to 4,000 CNY (47.19 percent). Lastly, respondents had 6 to 10 years of work experience (40.31 percent).

2) Motivational Factors: The majority of respondents expressed an overall 'Agree' with motivational factors ($\bar{X} = 3.71$, $SD = 0.54$). Examining individual aspects, respondents held the highest opinion of 'Advancement' ($\bar{X} = 3.77$, $SD = 0.65$), closely followed by 'Work itself' ($\bar{X} = 3.74$, $SD = 0.64$). In contrast, 'Responsibility' received the lowest average rating ($\bar{X} = 3.64$, $SD = 0.64$).

3) Hygiene Factors: The majority of respondents expressed an overall 'Agree' with hygiene factors ($\bar{X} = 3.66$, $SD = 0.51$). Examining individual aspects, respondents held the highest opinion of 'Supervision' ($\bar{X} = 3.89$, $SD = 0.69$), closely followed by 'Company policy' ($\bar{X} = 3.74$, $SD = 0.63$). In contrast, 'Working conditions' received the lowest average rating ($\bar{X} = 3.51$, $SD = 0.63$).

4) Organizational Commitment: The majority of respondents expressed an overall 'Agree' with organizational commitment ($\bar{X} = 3.64$, $SD = 0.53$). Examining individual aspects, respondents held the highest opinion of 'Normative commitment' ($\bar{X} = 3.66$, $SD = 0.60$), closely followed by 'Affective commitment' ($\bar{X} = 3.65$, $SD = 0.61$). In contrast, 'Continuance commitment' received the lowest average rating ($\bar{X} = 3.62$, $SD = 0.64$).

Table 1 Shows the test results for structural integrity and component weight

Factors	Loading	AVE	Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (ρ_A)	Jöreskog's rho (ρ_c)	Cronbach's alpha(α)
Motivation factors (MOT)		0.638	0.908	0.908	0.907
- Achievements	0.826				
- Recognition	0.833				
- Responsibility	0.812				
- Work itself	0.822				
- Advancement	0.777				
Hygiene factors		0.663	0.921	0.916	0.916
- Salary and benefits	0.578				
- Working conditions	0.664				
- Company policy	0.755				
- Job security	0.774				
- Interpersonal relationships	0.806				
- Supervision	0.803				
- Status	0.819				
- Work-life balance	0.850				
Organizational commitment		0.579	0.846	0.840	0.834
- Affective commitment	0.849				
- Continuance commitment	0.830				
- Normative commitment	0.710				

According to Table 1, shows that all observed variables in the model have factor loading values greater than 0.5, ranging from 0.578 to 0.850, indicating their measurement reliability. When assessing the model's validity, Dijkstra-Henseler's rho (ρ_A) ranged from 0.846 to 0.921, Jöreskog's rho (ρ_c) ranged from 0.840 to 0.916, and Cronbach's alpha (α) ranged from 0.834 to 0.916, all exceeding the threshold of 0.7. Additionally, the latent variables demonstrate discriminant validity, as reflected in the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranging from 0.579 to 0.663 (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016).

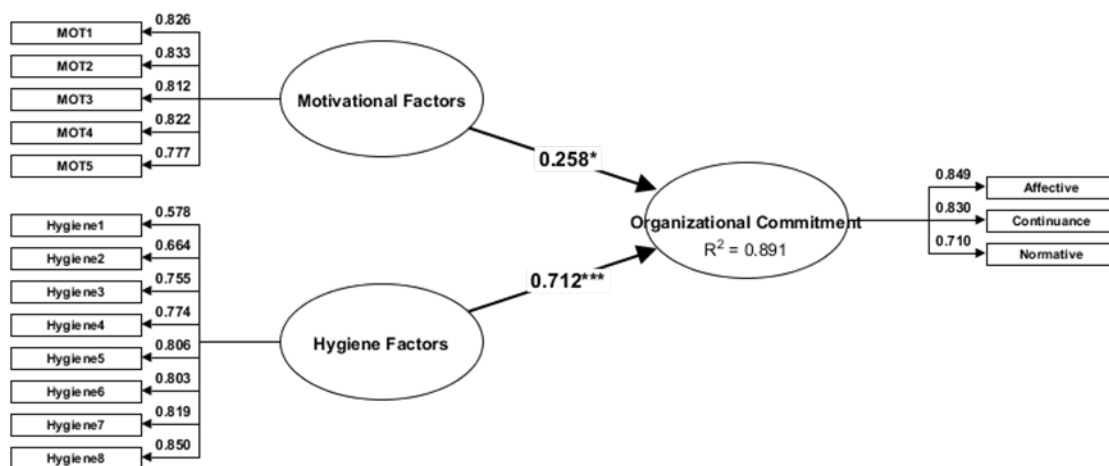
**Figure 2** Shows the results of hypothesis testing

Table 2 Show effects between motivation factors, hygiene factors and organizational commitment

Effects	Beta	t-test	p-value	Cohen's F2
Motivation factors	0.258	2.515	.006**	0.154
Hygiene factors	0.712	7.203	.000***	1.178

*** Statistical significance at .001 level

** Statistical significance at .01 level

* Statistical significance at .05 level

According to Table 2, shows that both Motivation factors and Hygiene factors exert direct and statistically significant effects on organizational commitment in the case study of Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd. were statistically significant at the 0.05 level, and the model exhibited a predictive power of 89.1 percent ($R^2 = 0.891$).

Notably, Hygiene factors had the most substantial influence on organizational commitment, with a standard path coefficient of 0.712, while Motivation factors had the second-highest influence, with a standard path coefficient of 0.258.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The study confirmed that motivation factors significantly influence organizational commitment at Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd. The significance of motivation in fostering organizational commitment is well-established. Extensive scholarly research has explored the relationship between these two concepts, shedding light on the intricate mechanisms through which motivational factors affect individuals' commitment and loyalty to their organizations. Intrinsic motivation, in particular, relates to an individual's innate drive and personal satisfaction derived from participation in activities or affiliation with an organization. Recent research, as indicated by Ryan and Deci (2017), highlights a positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment in the workforce. When employees are intrinsically motivated, they tend to develop a stronger sense of alignment with the organization's values and goals, resulting in higher levels of commitment. For example, individuals who derive intrinsic satisfaction from their work, experience a sense of autonomy, and feel that their skills are well utilized are more likely to demonstrate unwavering dedication to their respective companies. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation pertains to external factors influencing individuals' actions, such as incentives, recognition, and compensation. According to recent research, as conducted by Darioly et al. (2020), provides evidence that employees' perception of a fair and impartial reward system has a positive impact on their level of loyalty to the organization. A well-structured incentive program, aligned with both individual and organizational objectives, can create a sense of value and recognition, thereby strengthening commitment. Additionally, the implementation of recognition programs, whether formal or informal, has been shown to significantly enhance organizational commitment by fostering a sense of acknowledgment and appreciation among employees (Papalexandris et al., 2017). The role of effective leadership in motivating employees and influencing their commitment to the company's objectives is crucial. Recent research conducted by Józefowska et al. (2020) suggests that organizational commitment is positively affected by transformational leadership. Transformational leaders, characterized by traits like vision, motivation, and intellectual stimulation, have the capacity to inspire and engage their team members, fostering a collective sense of direction and purpose. By providing guidance and support, these leaders create a motivating environment that cultivates increased levels of commitment. Moreover, research, such as that by Wu et al. (2017), has shown that leaders demonstrating authentic empathy, fairness, and integrity have a positive impact on the perceived value of the organizational connection, leading to increased levels of commitment. In summary,

motivational factors play a pivotal role in influencing employees' dedication to their respective organizations. Organizational commitment is influenced by various factors, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, job satisfaction, equitable incentives, engagement in goal setting, and effective leadership. Understanding and applying these elements can help companies cultivate a committed and dedicated workforce.

The research findings indicate that hygienic factors have a significant impact on the level of organizational commitment among employees at Sinopec Shanghai Branch and Shanghai Free Trade Zone Management Co., Ltd. Organizational commitment holds significant importance in today's competitive corporate landscape, referring to an individual's psychological attachment and dedication to an organization, including their willingness to invest effort and sustain their affiliation. The establishment and preservation of organizational commitment are influenced by various factors, with hygiene elements playing a significant role. The concept of hygiene factors, initially introduced by psychologist Frederick Herzberg, relates to external or extrinsic aspects in a professional environment that typically revolve around the absence of certain elements that can lead to dissatisfaction. These features encompass factors like job security, compensation, working conditions, and related dimensions. While hygiene factors may not directly contribute to satisfaction or commitment, their presence or absence significantly influences an individual's perception and commitment to an organization. The impact of hygienic variables on organizational commitment was investigated in a recent study conducted by Liu, Zhao, and Liu (2021). The study's results revealed a statistically significant and positive relationship between hygienic factors and organizational commitment. The research underscored the idea that when hygiene elements are adequately met, employees tend to consider them as basic expectations, leading to feelings of contentment and satisfaction. Conversely, in situations where hygiene components are lacking or insufficient, employees experience dissatisfaction, resulting in a decline in their commitment to the organization. Job security is a fundamental element that significantly influences an individual's commitment and loyalty to a company, offering stability and faith in long-term prospects within the organization. A meta-analysis conducted by Vinokurawa, Graham, and Wright (2020) aimed to investigate the relationship between job security and organizational commitment. The study revealed a strong positive correlation between job stability and overall commitment levels. Employees who perceive a stable future and have less apprehension about potential job cuts are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of dedication and loyalty to their employer. In addition, compensation and benefits are vital factors with a significant impact on organizational commitment. A competitive salary structure, coupled with a comprehensive benefits program, not only meets employees' financial needs but also further enhances their commitment to the organization. Jiang, Meng, and Zhang (2020) conducted research to explore the relationship between wage satisfaction and organizational commitment, revealing a strong positive connection. The study found that employees who perceive their income as fair and sufficient tend to have higher levels of organizational commitment. Furthermore, the working environment and conditions are additional hygiene-related factors with a significant impact on organizational commitment. A pleasant and accommodating work environment has been demonstrated to positively affect employees' morale and dedication. According to a study conducted by Hayes, Yang, and Williams (2018), the research results revealed a significant and positive correlation between working conditions and organizational commitment. The findings suggest that providing a secure and conducive work environment for employees is perceived as a sign of the organization's care and support, leading to increased levels of commitment.

The research underscores the importance of intrinsic motivators, including recognition, achievement, and personal development, in nurturing organizational commitment. Managers can apply this knowledge by incorporating these motivators into their performance evaluation systems, offering opportunities for skill enhancement, and fostering a work environment that

promotes a sense of achievement and acknowledgment. This, in turn, has the potential to lead to increased levels of employee engagement, satisfaction, and ultimately, a stronger commitment to the organization. Furthermore, the research underscores the importance of extrinsic motivators, such as rewards and incentives, in promoting commitment. Managers can utilize this insight to create incentive systems aligned with the individual preferences and career goals of their employees. Effective strategies, including offering cash incentives, promotions, and flexible benefits based on individual achievements, can help managers cultivate employee commitment and enhance performance levels. Lastly, the research highlights the importance of managers considering the variations in motivational factors among individuals. Recognizing that employees are motivated by diverse reasons is crucial in tailoring effective incentive techniques. Therefore, it's essential for managers to adopt a personalized approach in understanding and addressing the unique motivators of each employee, thereby enhancing their level of commitment to the organization.

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