

Original Paper

Motivation Theories: Validity During Economic Crisis. The Evidence of Greek Structural Design Engineers

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Abstract

A first attempt to understand human motivation dates back to the time of Greek philosophers and focuses on hedonisms a basic driving force in human behavior One of the first studies on motivation in the workplace is the work of Frederick Taylor (1911) and his collaborators that resulted in the development of the Scientific Management theory. In the 1950s, many new models of employees motivation emerged, while in the mid-1960s, a new approach to studying work motivation emerged, that focused on outlining the processes that could explain job motivation. These American motivation theories reflect the cultural environment of the United States of the late 19th and 20th century and were developed based on American national culture in conditions of rapid economic growth. In Greece during 2010-2018 a great economic crisis happened resulted in high and constantly increasing unemployment rates, and a reduction in the well-being. It may be therefore not be particularly suited to studying cases that escaped this particular socio-economic model or required a rethink of the importance of the motivation factors considered by them.

Keywords

motivation, crisis, HR Management, Greece

1. Introduction

Atkinson (1964) defines motivation as “the control or direct influence on the direction, the courage and the persistence of an act”. Other researchers define it as the internal power that guides human behavior. According to Bourantas (1992), motivation could be defined as “the internal process of pushing man’s behavior toward the goals whose realization has the consequence of satisfying his needs”. People behave in a certain way because they have certain needs that they want to satisfy. Although many researchers have attempted to come up with a clear definition of motivation, there seems to be no general agreement

about how the term should be defined. This is due to the fact that these definitions reflect their own perceptions and experiences in the specific research area.

A detailed definition was presented by Analoui (2000) who illustrated that “*motivation is the internal drive necessary to guide people’s actions and behaviors toward achievement of some goals*”. This drive or force comes from the desire to satisfy certain needs and expectations (Mullins, 2005). Similarly, Kast and Rosenzweig (1979) defined motivation as “*what perhaps prompts a person to act in a certain way or at least develop a propensity for specific behaviour*”. Other researchers see motivation as an internal state that encourages people to behave in a certain way in order to accomplish specific desired goals.

Different assumptions have as result various motivation theories, although classic motivation theories in the management context are American (Maslow, McClelland, Herzberg, etc.). These theories (Table 1) reflect the culture in which they were developed. The American motivation theories reflect the cultural environment of the United States of its day. Most of the theorists were middle-class intellectuals, so their theories reflect the national intellectual middle-class culture background of 19th and 20th century. This period covers a period of rapid economic growth (1865-1928), the Wall street crash (1929), the Great Depression period (1930-1940), the First World War (1940-1945). The second half of the twenty century was a time of high economic growth (1945-1964), sexual freedom and drugs, while the concept of 1980’s based on huge consumption of money and goods. In general, it was a period of economic growth and recovery.

In Greece during the current economic crisis, the biggest issue, with no doubt, is the sharp increase in unemployment. The unemployment rate was around 10% in the first half of the previous decade. In May 2008, the unemployment rate reached the highest level of the last decade (325,000 workers, or 6.6% of the workforce). It then began to grow as the country plunged into the recession. In May 2013 (period that out survey conducted the number of unemployed was almost 1.4 million and the unemployment rate was 27.5%, while the corresponding rates in the other European countries were much lower: 26.3% in Spain, 17.2% % in Portugal, 13.5% and 12.1% in Ireland and Italy respectively (Eurostat, 2013).

1.1 Motivation Theories

The first thoughts about how to motivate employees to develop their productivity started in the late 19th Century. Early 20th Century companies adopt the concept of Frederick Taylor’s about the “piece rate” system. Industrial engineers used “scientific” studies to define the most efficient process for job.

Table 1. Timescale: Motivation Theories/USA Economy Growth

| Theories | Decade | U.S.A Economy |
|---------------|--------|--|
| Taylor (1911) | 1910 | Rapid economic growth |
| Mayo (1924) | 1920 | Wealthiest country in the word 1929 Wall street crash |
| | 1930 | 1933 Nadir |

| | | |
|-----------------------|------|--------------------------------|
| | | 1933-1938 Recovery |
| Maslow (1943) | 1940 | 1940-1945 FWW |
| | 1950 | |
| McGregor (1960) | | 1945-1965 High economic growth |
| McClelland (1961) | | |
| Adams (1963) | 1960 | |
| Vroom (1964) | | |
| Herzberg (1966) | | Economy prosperous |
| Locke (1968) | | |
| Lawler (1970) | 1970 | Economy faltered |
| Hackman/Oldham (1976) | | 1973 oil crisis |
| | | 1983 recovery |
| Bandura (1986) | 1980 | Great consumption |

Source: current work.

The managers of the Western Electric Company (1924) introduced the Hawthorne Studies. Elton Mayo, the founder of Human Relations School, observed that the productivity grew no matter what changes were made to the working environment.

The Maslow Hierarchy of Needs (written during the Great Depression) was based on his studies on the difficulties in the lives of the individuals. Maslow created his theory based on the five set of goals that people try to achieve in order to satisfy their needs. Above needs define (Latham, 2006) the behavior and the sort of attitude that a man adopts in order to reach at the stage they are currently in. McGregor (1960) categorized the types of people into two groups that had two different approaches. McClelland (1961) concentrated on the motivation process of a range of distinct and clearly defined needs, such as: achievement, affiliation, power and autonomy.

1.2 USA in 20th Century

The history of United States consists of a period of high economic growth. The United States becomes the world's prevalent economic force. A huge wave of European immigration (U.S. Bureau, 1976) supplied the manpower for the development of industry while at the same time provided the population base for fast-growing urban America. By the late nineteenth century, the United States had developed in the main global industrial power, leading on new technologies, expanding its railroad network, and having a great number of natural recourses (coal, timber, and oil).

In 1920's, America was the wealthiest country. Almost everybody seemed to have a well paid job and cash to spend. In October 1929, the Wall Street Crash took place. The Wall Street Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression forced the government to rebuild the economy. The worst time of the Great Depression was 1933, while the recovery was fast until the recession of 1938. The period from 1945 to 1964 was a

rapid economic growth time and development. It was also a period of confrontation as United States and its allies politically opposed the Soviet Union and other communist countries (start of the Cold War) On the domestic, after a short devolution, the economy developed fast, with great prosperity, high salaries, while the remaining farmers moved to the cities (Alan, 2006).

America's economy was prosperous until the early 1970s, but at the next years started losing its strength under the foreign competition and the high oil prices. In 1973, USA faced an oil crisis when OPEC stopped shipping oil to nations supporting Israel. America recovered in 1983; unemployment declined and GDP got growth. Inflation was reduced; Housing started boomed and the automobile industry recovered its vitality (Chafe, 1990). The concept of 80s was associated with extravagance and transformation.

1.3 The Current Social/Working Face of Greece

Due to the impact of the economic crisis and the high and constantly increasing unemployment rates, there is a significant fall in the levels of poverty in Greece and a reduction in the well-being of its inhabitants. The austerity program includes reduction of the Public Sector expenses and gradual elimination of various subsidies (health, education), reduction at Public sector wages, pension cuts, social welfare payments and harsh taxation. The above crisis has a series of negative social and economic impacts on the society. The principal ones are the vicious circle of recession, the unemployment, the pressure on the middle and social class order, the rise of the homeless, the increase of desperate people and the deterioration of public health.

The impact of the crisis on jobs was different in each workplace. More jobs were lost to industry than to services, while employment in agriculture looks to have come to a limit. As far as professional gradation is concerned, the crisis seems to have altered the composition of the workforce. Specialist workers in non-manual occupations, such as directors, technicians and related professions, account for more than 50% of total employment decline. Qualified and semi-skilled workers in manual occupations also experienced significant job losses. By contrast, job losses among low-skilled workers in non-manual occupations, such as employees, were offset by higher employment between services and sales workers. Permanent employment (the common form of work in Greece) has declined in recent years, while part-time work has increased. In 2012, 10.0% of all workers in Greece were on fixed-term contracts and 7.7% a hundred of them worked part-time, compared with 13.8% and 23.1%, respectively, in the European Union. The above data does not include non-standardized forms of self-employment considered as self-employed.

More than one third of all Greek workers are self-employed, the highest percentage in the European Union. The above population is a relatively heterogeneous group, consisting of farmers with often small land plots, shop owners, other traders, self-employed and members of the liberal professions (law, medicine and engineers). Self-employed also include an unknown number of workers who provide dependent work that translates into self-employment by providing services to a single provider in a continuous manner, hence acting as employees (OECD, 2010). In the self-employed sector, a large

number of businesses were closed, resulting in job losses. Nevertheless, the contraction in self-employment was slightly lower than in all employment. At this point, it would be useful to point out that an unknown number of self-employed workers seem to hold a job, even if the business is their net income is zero. This is a case of engineers who have been left with little or no job activity due to the great crisis in the construction sector.

While job losses have reached an abnormally high number, on the other hand the loss of income for those who are still working is also important. The average real gross earnings of workers have lost more ground since the beginning of the crisis than it was acquired over the nine years prior to that. In particular, having increased by 23% in the period 2000-2009, in 2013 the average earnings had fallen below the 2000 level by 9%. Overall, a decline in earnings over the period 2009-2013 was over 26% on average (gross earnings). The increasing tax pressure has brought the above loss even more pronounced in clean terms. Profit from self-employment also declined, but in this case reliable estimates are difficult to record. Note that the above applies to the official sector of the economy. In the so-called informal sector (part of the construction industry, agriculture, tourism and other services), where employers are subject to fewer restrictions, the losses are definitely more.

1.4 Working Hypotheses

Two were the main assumptions of the current research that concerned:

- the peculiarity of the socio-economic context (economic crisis);
- the peculiarity of the population to be researched (double occupation, self-employment trend).

These following assumptions also relied on the assumptions of the research:

A. The well-known theories of motivation were developed in conditions of rapid economic growth. It may be therefore:

- Not be particularly suited to studying cases that escaped this particular socio-economic model.
- Or required a rethink of the importance of the motivation factors considered by them.

B. The possibility of double-employment, and the professional perspective of self-employment, affects the potency of the incentive-induced motivation factors, either in terms of content or importance.

2. Objectives

2.1 Objectives of the Research

The subject we are examining is in the wider field of HR management and focusing in the employee's motivation and especially in conditions of economic crisis. The research focused on a specific professional team: the Greek Design engineers and especially in those who work with a dependent employment relationship within a firm.

2.2 Specific Objectives

The current research has two objectives. The first objective is to find out the factors that motivate employees during the current economic crisis in Greece. The second goal is to explore the validation of the most known theories during that crisis.

3. Methodology

The theoretical part of the research is based on the review of the literature. The methodology used for this part was the usual for this type of theoretical research. The most known motivation theories (that are listed on Table 1) are described and analyzed in brief in the Discussion section that follows.

Semi-structured interviews were used for the empirical part of the paper. Interviews enable us to capture ideas of respondent without biasing them by our own ideas. Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) is a systematic methodology that enables to search for and conceptualize social patterns and structures. It is based on collection of qualitative data in which repeated ideas, concepts and structures are searched for. Grounded theory may lead to identification of new concepts and theories. The collection of data was done by a qualitative research via structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they allow asking all respondents same, previously decided open questions and at the same time give the respondents the space to formulate their ideas freely. The survey with small number of respondents helps the author to capture important patterns concerning motivation of employees and develop the foundations for the future research which is intended to be done as quantitative empiric research by the questionnaire.

The Greek Structural Design Engineers mainly in large urban centers (especially in Athens) who work in large companies providing dependent work as consultants is the target population. The interviews were done with 12 employees. The author of this article does not provide any statistical analysis that at the moment it would not make sense. The interviews took place during 2013 in Athens, Greece.

As sample, the employees of two structural design consultancies (Firm A, B) were selected in the Athens area. These companies have all the typical features of the Greek Structural design companies:

- Owner Civil Engineer, who developed his personal business into a company.
- Employees: Structural Design engineers and draftsmen
- Company with a long history in the sector that only deals with the design not the construction.
- Number of employees during the crisis: 5 to 8 people

Company A mainly deals with private sector business/buildings (hotel units, warehouse, residences commercial developments) while company B mainly deals with publics and c design of concrete infrastructure projects. Company A has a wider range of projects, smaller budget projects, shorter-term studies, and it is dependent on private initiative. Company B, on the other hand, is fully specialized in its sector, has a small number of projects, that have a long duration and their budget is fully dependent on the public sector.

Company A (building design projects) has been established in 1995 in the field of Design and Supervision (mainly private projects) of various projects and the provision of technical consultancy services through the following three sectors: Project Management-Design and analysis-Energy Projects. Total employees: 9/6 Structural Design engineers.

Company B (Infrastructure deign projects) has been established in 1993, offering services in the field of Design and Supervision of various categories of various projects (public and private) and technical

consultancy services. Total employees: 8/Structural Design engineers.

4. Results-Motivation Factors during the Economic Crisis

The analysis of interviews shows that during the period of the economic crisis in Greece, the motivation factors were transformed and adapted to the new needs of the workers. Specifically:

- The motivation of stability and security has been replaced by the satisfaction of the need to belong to a social/work place.
- The characteristics of the job (e.g., interesting job, personal responsibility for the result, which requires knowledge and skills and can be fulfilled from start to finish) continued to incite the employees, but their strength decreased.
- The characteristics of the good boss (as a motivating factor) have been greatly modified by a “person responsible and man with knowledge and skills to solve any technical problem at work” turned into “the one who will discuss with their employees their daily problems, support and will be their link with the Administration”.
- The need for communication/information from management on the current situation, future actions and plans to exit the crisis has emerged as a key driver of motivation.
- Perhaps as a most important factor we can consider the image of a Management team and a leader with will and ability to cope with and overcome the crisis. Essential feature of reliability and stability.
- A form of social equality/sharing of economic losses acts as a factor of motivation. The financial difficulties combined with the parallel reduction of income they face make them feel socially degraded while their employers still hold their position. Employees are looking to see the consequences of economic of crisis on their employers as well.

5. Motivation theories: Validity in the Era of Economic Crisis

At this section the most known motivation theories (that are listed on Table 1) are described and analyzed in brief and then the motivation factors that emerged from above research are compared with these. Specifically, reference is made to the following Theories:

- Needs Theory-Maslow.
- Existence-Social Relations-Growth needs-ERG-C.D. Alderfer.
- Theory of Acquired Needs-Mc Cleland.
- Hygiene-Induction Theory (Two Factors)-F. Herzberg.
- Adams Justice/Equality Theory.
- Theories of Expectations (Vroom, 1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968).
- Theory of targeting, (Locke, Hackman & Oldham).
- Theory of Self Efficiency (Bandura).
- Skinner’s reinforcement theory.

5.1 Content Theories

First, we will try to highlight the motivational factors as described in the early motivation (content), theories assuming that people work to meet their needs that set goals that in turn form behaviors in the workplace. Assumption of the current research is that all employees are not in the poverty line and have met their survival needs for them and their families.

5.1.1 Maslow Theory

According to the above assumption, we consider that they have covered the first category of needs (Basics) and they continue to the second level (security needs) where we meet the need to avoid risks, deprivation, seeking stability, income security and permanent work.

The need for security (second level) occurs in the form of a search for financial certainty (permanent work), preference for a familiar working environment, and a wish for working at a familiar environment. In the case of the current research, this need for employees can no longer be met. Everywhere there is insecurity, an unknown 'tomorrow' and unstable economic environment, in which the satisfaction of this need seems utopian.

Recognition needs (third level) appear as social needs in which the feeling of "belonging", the desire of individual to belong to a group, to be valuable/irreplaceable and to develop friendly relations within that group. This level is independent of the human nature and deals with the emotional part of the human personality.

During the current research above motivation factors (in general, but more during the economic crisis) appeared to be significant, especially among married women, who had a strong need to belong to a social/work group, while most men colleagues did not refer to that.

We continue to the fourth level: Needs of appreciation-self-esteem. At this level of the pyramid there is a separation from the previous needs categories that are characterized by the lacking a basic physiological or psychological staff. Meeting the needs of this level seems to have a limited intensity at that particular moment since the attention of employees is mainly focused on adapting to new social and working conditions and their survival.

At the top of the pyramid (fifth level) we meet the need of self-realization or integration. These needs are the top of the pyramid, describing the individual's pursuit of maximizing his potential, realizing all his dreams and aspirations. At this level, we found only one employee who is at the highest rank, he is in the age of 36-45, he has an experience of 10+ years and plans to set up his own business by collaborating with two friends in the developing sector of energy production using photovoltaic elements.

We comment on the validity of Maslow's theory in times of economic crisis:

- The assumption of meeting the needs of the first level is necessary.
- It is noted that many needs operate at the same time especially at the lower levels. For example, the needs of the third level act as motives, although these of second level cannot be satisfied in times of economic crisis. Employees are unable to meet their need for certainty so try to meet social needs (next level).

- The need to satisfy social before security needs can also be translated as a challenge to the hierarchy of the second/third levels. In many societies the consideration of social needs is more important than that of security.
- In general, the absolute hierarchy of the factors and the prerequisite satisfaction of the lower levels for climbing in the next
- The motivation factors during the crisis *period limited to the satisfaction of the first three levels, while upper levels are difficult to operate.*

5.1.2 Alderfer Theory

Alderfer's theory limited Maslow's five levels above-mentioned needs to the following three levels:

- existence needs-physiological and safety needs of Maslow
- needs related to the social environment-social needs of Maslow-and
- growth needs-needs of Maslow's assessment and self-realization, according to Maslow.

The results of the current research show that they are more compatible with Alderfer's theory. Employee needs are divided into three categories (elements in which all content theories agree): survival - social relations-development needs. There is a continuous range of needs without an absolute and clearly defined differentiation in their hierarchy. When an employee considers that a need is impossible to be satisfied, then his efforts are redirected to meet different needs. For example, the security needs of employees are impossible to be satisfied under these conditions of the economic crisis. They go on, trying to meet their social and recognition needs.

Alderfer's theory as afterward of Maslow's is expected to be closer to reality. Its variations from the latter make it undoubtedly more realistic. The motivation of employees goes through the satisfaction of "existential needs", "needs of relationships" and "development needs» that can exist at the same time, at the same person, without excluding one of the above categories being prevalent. Alderfer's theory, like Maslow's theory, is limited in character and fails to elucidate the dissimilarity of changing human needs in the working environment and how they are covered.

5.1.3 The Theory of McClelland

In the same research context, McClelland studied the human behavior of employees in different businesses and the developed the theory of acquired needs. According to his theory, individuals have specific needs that stimulate employee behavior and are shaped and developed during their lives (acquired needs). Three most important acquired needs that motivate the individual, and lead them into a particular behavior are:

- The need to achieve;
- The need for acceptance-relationships;
- The need for power-power;

The importance that each individual give to each of them is different and affects his behavior in the desired direction and motivation. According to McClelland, needs are influenced by the cultural background and the life individual's experiences. His theory is more generalized with regard to

motivation factors. *An important element is the introduction of the parameters of cultural differences, personal experiences and environmentally variable of needs. The introduction of the above parameters gives a universal character to the above theory.*

5.1.4 Herzberg Theory

The above-mentioned researchers (Maslow, McClelland, and Alderfer) focused on the needs satisfaction as key factors for the workplace behaviors. On the contrary, Herzberg tried to understand how the nature of the job itself affects the motivation.

In his theory, Herzberg considered the environment of a workplace (hygiene factor), to be connected with the satisfaction of motivation factors. He has argued that it is significantly influenced by the extent to which a job inherently provides opportunities for recognition and reinforcement.

During current research, several hygienic factors have been found to be absent during the economic crisis.

The most important were:

- Wages-salary (delays-reduction, instead)
- good organization policy (lack of communication instead)
- good working conditions (insecurity and anxiety instead)
- sense of security

At the same period, several motivating factors (as a result of the nature of the work) were detected, such as:

- important and interesting work
- responsibility (responsibility) that characterizes a project
- progress or development that a job can offer to the individual.
- freedom of initiative

The lack a great number of hygiene factors leads to a state of dissatisfaction, while at the same time the limited weight of the motivation factors from the work itself can't motivate the employees during the crisis.

As a result, the motivation of employees is not achieved and is not provided the opportunity to employees to meet the development/self-realization needs. According to the results of current research, the Herzberg theory and its assumptions are fully verified.

5.1.5 Motivation Content Theories/Validity of Economic Crisis Time

Summing up the exploration of early theories of motivation (content), we conclude that the assumption of coverage first level needs (of Maslow's theory), is a necessity for all theories during the economic crisis. Maslow's theory as a precursor of all and not exclusively addressed to the working environment, in general but especially during the period of economic crisis needs updating, according to the following:

- Employee needs act as motivation factors at the same time/simultaneously (especially those in the lower levels).
- The intensity of satisfaction of needs change, depending on the working environment.
- Employees not having the ability to meet a category of needs turn to another category

- The hierarchy between the second (security needs) and third (social needs) level should be explored on a case basis (economic - social environment).
- The consideration the prerequisite satisfaction of lower levels for moving to the next level
- Motivation factors in the crisis period accumulate at the first three levels, while upper levels are difficult to operate.

Alderfer's theory, as a follow-up to Maslow's, seems to be closer to reality. Its variations from the latter make it undoubtedly more realistic. The Motivation of employees goes through the satisfaction of "existential needs", "needs of relationships" and "development needs" that cannot be ruled out at the same time by the same person, without of course excluding one of the above categories being prevalent. McClelland's theory includes three types of motivation needs/factors (generally formulated). The importance that each individual gives to them is different and decisive in motivating them. Another important element of the theory is the dependence of the above needs on the individual's cultural background and personal experiences. The introduction of the above parameters gives a general, wider character to the above theory.

This theory attempts to highlight the dissimilarity of changing human needs in the working environment. Its implementation in the current period of economic crisis would not require any updating. We end up at the same for the theory of Herzberg, as the results of current research verifies the theory.

5.2 Modern Theories of Motivation (Process Theories)

Process theories consider that the behavior of the employees is determined and shaped by both the external environment and the individual. It is the individual who will eventually decide on how to behave and determine the intensity of the effort he will make in his work. Needs and goals vary between individuals, and specific behaviors lead to specific results. These theories do not focus on identifying motivational factors but try to interpret employee attitudes and operating mechanisms.

5.2.1 The Adams Justice/Equality Theory (1965)

According to this theory, employees choose the behavior they think they will receive a fair reward, compared to the currently data. The employees have an internal criterion according to which he/she feels fairness or injustice in his/her treatment of the wider working environment (compared to other employees in his or her environment).

In the current research, a feeling of social inequality/unequal distribution of economic losses is appeared among employees. The financial difficulties combined with the reduction of the income make them feel socially degraded, while their employers still hold their social position/status/. That makes them feel that the social distance between them and their employers get widen. Employees are looking to see the consequences of economic crisis (financial losses) on their employers as well. Getting away this inequality would probably work as motivation factor. Therefore, the theory of justice is verified during the economic crisis.

5.2.2 Theories of Expectations (Vroom, 1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968)

The theory of expectations assumes that employees' perception that their effort will lead to high

performance that in turn will lead to a good reward is a factor of motivation (Triperina, 2002). Vroom's theory underlines the necessity of linking wages to employee performance. Vroom considers the process of motivation as a form of negotiation between employees and employers. The motivation, therefore, depends on what the employees think they will offer to the company and what they think they will receive as a reward from the company (Papalexandri-Bourantas, 2003). The theories of expectation refer to the reward of good return (growth) and the expected reward from the Firm. A good economic climate is a prerequisite for its consideration. This absence makes it difficult to apply and makes it inappropriate for a period of economic crisis.

5.2.3 The Theory of Targeting (Locke, 1968; Hackman & Oldham, 1976)

In the late 1960s, Edwin Locke presented his theory considering that attempting to achieve a goal is a key source of motivation. The model of Hackman and Oldham that was presented in 1976 expresses the tendency of modern motivation theories to focus on how the work is structured. Their research on work design has concluded that the way a job is organized can increase or reduce the effort being made (Vakola, 2011). When a person is working towards a particular goal, he is motivated more effectively. His theory suggests that individuals are motivated internally (inherent characteristics) and produce more when they:

- realize that their work is important,
- they are personally responsible for the outcome of their work and
- obtain immediate and reliable information on the results of their work.

During current research, the following motivation factors were identified (as a result of the nature of the work):

- important and interesting work
- responsibility that characterizes the project
- freedom of initiative

However, the influence of these motivation factors (intrinsic) does not succeed in motivating employees during economic crisis. We may consider that these factors replace the hygiene factors (according to Herzberg), that are absent from the workplace during this period. This theory does not seem to be verified during the current economic crisis. It considers as prerequisite a good working environment that is absent this period

5.2.4 Theory of Self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

The theory of self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 1985) refers to the perception that the individual desires to feel he has control of his actions. He considers that the exogenous rewards reduce intrinsic interest in a job. Three are the basic internal needs that sustain the development and motivation of the individual:

- Need for autonomy;
- Need to acquire competencies;
- Need for positive ties (relatedness).

In the current research, the factors autonomy, skill acquisition and the need for positive ties were reported as motivation factors during the pre-crisis period, but during the crisis period the only factor that

mentioned was the positive ties. Above change leads us to the conclusion that theory is not valid in difficult economic conditions. The results of current research highlight that the absence of exogenous factors reduces the endogenous effect on the final motivation of the employees

5.2.5 Theory of Self-Efficacy (Bandura, 1997)

It refers to a person's belief that he is capable of successfully completing a project. The author of the above theory of self-efficacy, Albert Bandura (1997) proposes four ways to increase it:

- Enactive mastery, acquisition of work-related experience.
- Vicarious modeling-tracking someone else who carries out the job.
- Social persuasion-Verbal persuasion in the form of encouragement, trust and positive feedback from others enhances the self-efficacy of the individual.
- Stimulation (physiological factor)-Stimulation leads to an activation state, which forces the individual to complete his work. The person is alert and performs better.

Looking at the results of the current research, we conclude that verbal persuasion in the form of encouragement by the manager would act as a motivating factor. Also, stimulation by the Management team would boost employee motivation. This theory has elements of application during the period of the economic crisis, not so much about the employee performance as the encouragement and psychological support of the employees.

5.2.6 Theory of Reinforcement (Skinner)

Above theory is based on the consideration that behavior is shaped by the environment and the effort of the employees is stimulated by external stimuli (positive reinforcement). The reinforcement is simply a method of changing the frequency of behavior. Based on the theory of functional addiction, the management can apply a behavioral modification system (Skinner, 1974), enhancing positive behaviors. This theory can be applied during the economic crisis considered that employees were looking for support and encouragement (positive reinforcement) from their workplace environment (from their management team).

5.2.7 Motivation Process Theories-Validity in Times of Economic Crisis

The theory of justice (Adams, 1965) appears to be verified during the economic crisis, since employees always look for justice equality. Also, the reinforcement theory (Skinner, 1974) may be applied during the economic crisis, considering that employees looking for support and encouragement (positive reinforcement) from their working environment.

On the contrary, expectations theories (Vroom, 1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968) and targeting (Locke, 1968) cannot be applied during the economic crisis, as they consider/require conditions of economic growth. The former refers to the expected reward for the employee's good performance by the company, while the latter considers the motivation factors that arise from the very nature of the profession, capable of effectively motivating the worker.

The theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) has been implemented in the period of the economic crisis, not so much in terms of work performance as the need of the encouragement and psychological support

of employees while Deci and Ryan theory (1985) seems to have limited power.

6. Conclusion

The American motivation theories reflect the cultural environment of the United States of the late 19th and 20th century. They were developed based on American national culture and the fast growing economy. They placed in the highest level the Achievement (term that difficult translated in any other language) as the goal of the typical American worker. In a framework, that employees had met their physiological and safety needs these theories encourage them to cover their higher needs (social needs, esteem, self-actualisation) through their work.

The transfer and the application of these theories from the wealth environment of 19th and 20th century to today's working environment in Greece needs a validity test and an adaptation to current context. In these days the main goal is the survival and not the achievement. The needs of employees' have changed dramatically, the safety in the workplace is lost, and the existing motivation theories seem not to work efficient through the whole scale of the economic environment.

The current empirical research concludes that McClelland's theory (that highlights s the diversity of changing human needs in the working environment) and Herzberg's theory are valid in the current period of economic crisis and would not require any updating.

On the contrary, expectations theories (Vroom, 1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968) and targeting (Locke, 1968) cannot be applied during the economic crisis, as they require conditions of economic growth. The first refers to the expected reward for the employee's good performance by the company, while the latter considers the motivation factors that arise from the nature of the profession and it's capable of effectively motivating the employees.

The theory of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) can be implemented in the period of the economic crisis, not so much in terms of work, but with the encouragement and psychological support of employees, while Deci and Ryan (1985) seems to have limited validity.

6.1 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Above research have several limitations. The first limitation regards my role as researcher during the field work and my potential impact in the research process. An important feature of qualitative research is "the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher" (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) that is called **reflexivity**. Reflexivity plays an important role in the constructivist grounded theory approach since this approach views the researcher not as an objective or neutral observer but as part of the world that studies (Charmaz, 2005). The constructivist grounded theory acknowledges the subjectivity of the researcher—the researcher co-constructs reality with the people who participate in the study (Charmaz, 2006)—and encourages the researcher to reflect on the effects she/he might bring in the study (Neill, 2006).

A second limitation is that research took place in the setting of a time and place employees' group that may An important feature of qualitative research is "the process of reflecting critically on the self as

researcher” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005) that is called *reflexivity*. Reflexivity plays an important role in the constructivist grounded theory approach since this approach views the researcher not as an objective or neutral observer but as part of the world that studies (Charmaz, 2005). The constructivist grounded theory acknowledges the subjectivity of the researcher—the researcher co-constructs reality with the people who participate in the study (Charmaz, 2006)—and encourages the researcher to reflect on the effects she/he might bring in the study (Neill, 2006). Differ in terms of purpose and structure from other workgroups. The findings are not easily transferable to other settings although they could offer useful insights in studying employee motivation, in general. This last limitation produces a recommendation for future research to include additional employees groups in the single study. The comparison between different workgroups could enable a more fruitful exploration of the role of motivation.

6.2 Contribution of the Study

The current study attempts to contribute in the field of motivation in workplace, taking into consideration the suggestions of several scholars (Hitka & Sirotiakova, 2011; Hitka & Balazova, 2015; Zavadsky et al., 2015) who point out the need for additional research on employee motivation during the economic crisis.

The research findings position the present study along other studies in the literature that emphasize the multiple character of motivation. The transfer and the application of America developed motivation theories within the wealth environment of 19th and 20th century to today’s working environment needs a validity test and an adaptation to current context

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