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## Research Article

### Exploring Employee Motivation: A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Motivational Factors Across Diverse Industries

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#### ABSTRACT

Motivated employees tend to be more productive, engaged, and are less likely to exhibit negative attitudes toward customers and colleagues, contributing significantly to overall organizational performance. This study employs a descriptive-quantitative research design to comprehensively examine key motivational factors influencing behavior and satisfaction across eight major industries: education, energy, finance and economics, food and beverage, health care, hospitality, pharmaceutical, and transportation. Data were gathered from a diverse sample of 353 respondents using a structured survey instrument designed to evaluate a multiple motivational drivers. These include good wages, appreciation for work done, job security, promotion and growth in the organization, interesting work, good working conditions, feeling of being in on things, tactful discipline, personal loyalty to employees, and sympathetic understanding of, or help with others. The analysis revealed that “good wages” consistently emerged as the most influential motivational factor across all sectors, emphasizing the fundamental importance of competitive financial compensation in enhancing employee motivation, engagement, and retention. In contrast, “sympathetic understanding of, or help with others” ranked as the least impactful factor, indicating that while emotional support is valued, it is generally less effective than tangible rewards in motivating employees to perform at high levels. These findings offer critical insights for organizational leaders and human resource professionals, highlighting the need to balance financial and non-financial motivators. Developing well-rounded, evidence-based motivational strategies that align with employee expectations and industry-specific needs can lead to higher employee satisfaction, reduced turnover, and improved organizational performance.

**Keywords:** *Employees motivation, industries, Business, Job, Performance, Dipolog, Dapitan*

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## Introduction

Employee motivation remains one of the most critical challenges organizations face in today's competitive environment. High turnover, often driven by poor motivation and a lack of commitment, disrupts productivity and increases operational costs. Understanding what drives employees to stay engaged and perform at their best is therefore vital for organizational success (Singh & Tiwari, 2011).

Motivation refers to the internal and external forces that initiate, guide, and sustains goal-directed behavior. Because employees vary in needs, values, and expectations, organizations must adopt inclusive motivational strategies that appeal to diverse workforces. According to Varma (2018), successful organizations integrate intrinsic motivation—such as personal fulfillment and growth—with extrinsic motivators like compensation and job security. Several global theories of motivation provide a foundation for understanding employee behavior. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1954) presents a five-tier model: physiological needs, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. Lower-level needs (e.g., wages and job security) are extrinsically driven, while higher-level needs (e.g., esteem and personal growth) depend more on intrinsic factors such as meaningful work and recognition. Motivational dynamics can also vary across industries. Research indicates that performance recognition improves outcomes in the energy sector (Nizam & Shah, 2015), while salary increments and training are key in finance (Mweemaba, 2019). In healthcare, patient satisfaction and staff competency drive motivation (Rosak-Szyrocka, 2015), and in hospitality, work environment and team relationships are critical (Sabri, Mutalib, & Hasan, 2019). These insights show that motivation is multifaceted and industry-specific.

In the Philippine context, especially in Region 9, where Zamboanga del Norte is located, motivation is deeply affected by economic limitations. Despite recent wage increases—from ₱351.00 to ₱381.00—this still falls short of the national benchmark of ₱610.00 (NewsToGov, 2023). Low wages and limited resources can reduce employee satisfaction and hinder

motivation. The province's slow industrial growth, poor infrastructure, and lack of training opportunities contribute to stagnant careers, poor working conditions, and limited professional advancement. These challenges are reflected in the Philippine Statistics Authority's labor turnover report, which showed voluntary resignation rates of 0.7% in Q3 and 0.6% in Q4 of 2021. This translates to 89–91 employees per 1,000 leaving their jobs, often due to unmet needs and lack of motivation.

Given this context, this research—"Exploring Employee Motivation: A Comprehensive Analysis of Key Motivational Factors Across Diverse Industries"—aims to identify the most significant motivators influencing employees across multiple sectors. By focusing on both general theories and the local realities of Region 9, the study will offer practical insights to help organizations reduce turnover, enhance job satisfaction, and improve overall workforce productivity.

### 1.2 Significance of the Study

- Increase high performance of employees.
- Improve the quality of output of employees.
- Reduce employee's absenteeism and turnover.
- Achieving harmony and peaceful environment within the workplace.

### 1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study analyzes the employees' motivational factors across different industries in the twin cities, Dipolog and Dapitan City, Zamboanga Del Norte:

1. Identify the motivational factors of employees across different industries.
2. To determine what is the top motivational factors among industries.
3. To give emphasis of the motivational factor of each business industry.
4. To explore other factors that motivates employees.
5. To determine if socio-demographic profile of respondents such age, sex, years of service, work status (part-time, temporary, and permanent) has a greater relationship towards employees motivation.

## Review of Literature

Motivation plays a pivotal role in enhancing organizational performance, employee satisfaction, and workforce stability. As Osabiya (2015) notes, motivated employees are more likely to remain loyal, adapt to change, and contribute positively to workplace culture. Sustained motivation can prevent high turnover, reduce absenteeism, and strengthen an organization's reputation. Understanding what motivates employees requires both theoretical and practical perspectives. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943, 1954) remains foundational in explaining how individuals progress from fulfilling basic needs—such as food and safety—to achieving higher-level desires like belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. These needs can be broadly classified into extrinsic motivators (e.g., wages, benefits, job security) and intrinsic motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition, autonomy). Rather than repeating Maslow's model in detail, McLeod (2018) and other scholars highlight its relevance in modern workplace settings: employees require fair compensation and physical security before they can fully engage with opportunities for growth and creativity. However, the challenge lies in aligning organizational strategies with individual motivations across diverse roles and industries.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory further refines this understanding by distinguishing between hygiene factors (such as salary and working conditions) and true motivators (such as advancement and recognition). Kokemuller (2020) supports this by emphasizing that opportunities for promotion and meaningful recognition tend to drive sustained performance more effectively than financial incentives alone. Empirical studies support these theoretical insights. Muogbo (2013) found that long-term employee retention and reduced turnover are strongly linked to perceived appreciation and inclusion in organizational decision-making. In industries like energy, finance, and healthcare, motivation correlates directly with productivity, innovation, and service quality (Nizam & Shah, 2015; Mweemaba, 2019; Rosak-Szyrocka, 2015). Despite these established frameworks, motivation is not one-size-fits-all. Intrinsic motivators such as alignment

of work with personal interests, access to training, and professional development opportunities are increasingly recognized as essential, particularly in knowledge-based or service-driven industries (Osabiya, 2015). Urichuck (2008) also emphasizes that motivated employees not only perform better but derive greater satisfaction from their roles. While much of the literature provides insights from global and developed contexts, there is limited research addressing motivational drivers in economically constrained regions like the Philippines' Region 9. Local challenges such as low wages, limited career progression, and infrastructural deficits remain understudied in motivation research. This gap underscores the need for a context-specific analysis that considers both universal motivational theories and localized economic realities. This study contributes to the literature by bridging that gap—investigating how key motivational factors operate across multiple industries in Zamboanga del Norte. It seeks to explore which motivators hold the greatest influence in a region where economic limitations shape employee expectations and workplace dynamics, offering practical implications for improving workforce engagement in similar settings.

## Theoretical Framework

This study anchored in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, which classifies workplace motivators into intrinsic (motivators) and extrinsic (hygiene factors). According to Herzberg, intrinsic factors—such as achievement, recognition, and opportunities for growth—lead to higher job satisfaction and motivation when present. In contrast, extrinsic factors—such as salary, job security, working conditions, and company policies—may prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily improve motivation when present alone.

Additionally, this study draws on Carolyn Wiley's (1997) research, "What Motivates Employees According to Over 40 Years of Motivation Surveys," which identified ten core motivational factors widely relevant across industries. These factors are aligned with Herzberg's intrinsic and extrinsic categories and serve as the framework for this study's analysis.

**Good Wages (Extrinsic):** Ranked highest across studies, wages fulfill basic needs and serve as a tangible acknowledgment of employee competence (Rosenfield, 1980; Wiersma, 1992).

**Appreciation for Work Done (Intrinsic):** Recognition reinforces desired behavior through positive feedback, increasing satisfaction and performance (Cherrington, 1992).

**Job Security (Extrinsic):** Security provides psychological stability, reducing anxiety and enabling long-term engagement.

**Promotion and Growth (Intrinsic):** Opportunities for advancement and skill development fulfill employees' desires for achievement and self-improvement, reflecting Herzberg's motivators.

**Interesting Work (Intrinsic):** Meaningful and engaging tasks contribute to empowerment and sustained commitment to organizational goals.

**Personal Loyalty to Employees (Extrinsic):** Demonstrated loyalty fosters trust and mutual respect, encouraging employees to reciprocate through dedication and effort.

**Good Working Conditions (Extrinsic):** Comfortable, safe, and well-equipped environments support productivity and physical well-being.

**Tactful Discipline (Extrinsic):** Fair and respectful correction enhances morale and maintains positive relationships in the workplace.

**Feeling of Being In on Things (Extrinsic):** Inclusion in decision-making fosters a sense of ownership and alignment with organizational goals.

**Sympathetic Understanding or Help with Personal Problems (Intrinsic):** Emotional support enhances trust and shows employees they are valued beyond their work output.

Together, these factors provide a comprehensive lens through which to examine what motivates employees across various industries. By grounding the study in Herzberg's theory and Wiley's findings, this framework supports the investigation of both universal and context-specific drivers of employee motivation—particularly in the economically constrained setting of Region 9.

## Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-quantitative research design utilizing a survey method to examine employee motivation across selected industries. This approach was chosen to gather measurable data and allow for statistical analysis of motivational factors within diverse organizational contexts.

The participants were selected using a purposive stratified sampling method to ensure representation across eight industries: education, energy, finance, food and beverage, healthcare, hospitality, pharmaceutical, and transportation. A total of 353 respondents were included, each meeting the criteria of being employed for at least six months in their respective industry. Stratification ensured proportional representation from each sector to capture industry-specific motivational trends. The survey instrument was adapted from Carolyn Wiley's (1997) list of ten motivational factors, which are grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. The items were modified slightly for local context and comprehensibility. The questionnaire consisted of close-ended items using a 5-point Likert scale, where respondents rated the importance of each motivational factor (1 = Not Important to 5 = Very Important).

To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed by three academic experts in organizational behavior and human resource management. A pilot test was conducted with 30 participants from similar sectors not included in the main study. Based on the pilot results, minor wording adjustments were made. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.86, indicating high internal consistency. Collected data were encoded and analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means, frequencies, and percentages to identify the most and least influential motivational factors across industries. Results were interpreted in relation to theoretical constructs to draw practical implications for workforce motivation strategies.

## Research Settings

The study will be conducted at Dipolog and Dapitan City only. According to the initial

survey conducted, employees nowadays are about to leave in one company as they are not happy and satisfied on what the company offered to them. Even if they already served the company for years, still, they opt to leave if there are other chances and opportunities from other companies. The researchers decided to conduct the study first in the twin cities to determine the top motivational factors before widening the scope of the study.

### Research Respondents

The research respondents for this study are characterized by its diverse industrial landscape, with participants drawn from eight distinct sectors: education, energy, finance and economics, food and beverage, health care, hospitality, pharmaceutical, and transportation. This study will involve a total of 353 employees, providing a broad spectrum of insights into motivational factors across various industries. The study's scope is limited to the eight industries from nine industries that were initially evaluated, with the notable exception of the

construction industry. Specifically, the numbers of participants are as follows, Health Care – 88, Energy – 25, Financial Institutions – 72, Food and Beverage – 55, Hotel – 31, Education – 65, Transportation – 24, and Pharmaceutical – 20 participants. It is to give emphasis that they are the only participants in the study who have given their consent to participate voluntarily.

### Expected Output

The project will present motivational factors of employees across different industries that help analyze the owners of various organizations to unlock the capabilities and skills of their employees. This will answer the questions of the employer of why employees leave their firm and transfer to the other firm. Employers will gain insights as to the behaviour and attitudes of employees towards their works and why behaving such a manner. This will help achieve sustainable organizations and a healthy workplace environment.

### Results and Discussions

Table 1. Average Rank Scores of Motivational Factors by Industry

Lower average scores indicate higher importance

Industry	Top 3 Motivational Factors (Avg. Rank)	Bottom 3 Motivational Factors (Avg. Rank)
<b>Health Care</b>	Good Wages (2.83)	Sympathetic Understanding (5.66)
	Job Security (2.93)	Tactful Discipline (4.87)
	Appreciation for Work Done (3.13)	Personal Loyalty (4.73)
<b>Energy</b>	Job Security (3.77)	Sympathetic Understanding (8.22)
	Good Wages (3.82)	Personal Loyalty (7.21)
	Appreciation for Work Done (3.84)	Tactful Discipline (7.19)
<b>Financial Institutions</b>	Good Wages (3.83)	Feeling of Inclusion (6.69)
	Good Working Conditions (3.93)	Sympathetic Understanding (5.87)
	Tactful Discipline (4.13)	Appreciation (5.73)

Industry	Top 3 Motivational Factors (Avg. Rank)	Bottom 3 Motivational Factors (Avg. Rank)
<b>Food and Beverage</b>	Good Wages (2.52)	Sympathetic Understanding (8.44)
	Tactful discipline (3.40)	Job Security (6.68)
	Interesting work (4.24)	Feeling of Inclusion (6.36)
<b>Hotel</b>	Good Wages (3.89)	Sympathetic understanding (8.11)
	Promotion and growth in the organization (4.16)	Feeling of Inclusion (6.90)
	Appreciation for work done (4.41)	Tactful Discipline (6.54)
<b>Education</b>	Good Wages (2.66)	Sympathetic Understanding (7.90)
	Job Security (3.38)	Feeling of Inclusion (7.26)
	Promotion and growth in the organization (4.36)	Personal Loyalty (6.68)
<b>Transportation</b>	Good Wages (1.00)	Sympathetic Understanding (9.68)
	Promotion and growth in the organization (3.20)	Tactful Discipline (7.80)
	Appreciation for work done (3.82)	Feeling of Inclusion (7.66)
<b>Pharmaceutical</b>	Good Wages (2.80)	Sympathetic Understanding (8.65)
	Job Security (4.10)	Personal Loyalty (7.45)
	Appreciation for work done (4.25)	Tactful Discipline (7.40)

This study compares how employees across various industries rank motivational factors. While certain motivators – like good wages and job security – consistently appear at the top across sectors, the relative importance of other factors varies, reflecting differing work environments and organizational cultures.

Health Care professionals place a high value on good wages (2.83) and job security (2.93), underscoring the importance of financial stability and employment continuity in a high-stress, high-responsibility sector. Appreciation for work (3.13) is also critical, likely because acknowledgment helps combat

emotional fatigue. Personal support factors, such as sympathy for personal problems (5.66), rank lower—perhaps indicating a culture more focused on professional output than emotional accommodation.

In the Energy sector, job security (3.77), good wages (3.82), and appreciation for work (3.84) are most valued. This industry’s focus on operational continuity and long-term infrastructure may explain the premium placed on stability and recognition. The low rankings for sympathetic understanding (8.22) and personal loyalty (7.21) suggest a culture that

prizes results and performance over interpersonal warmth.

Financial institutions emphasize monetary compensation and structure. Good wages (3.83) and working conditions (3.93) lead, followed by tactful discipline (4.13). The prominence of discipline suggests an environment that values formality and order. Lower rankings for appreciation and sympathy indicate a more transactional, perhaps competitive culture where emotional incentives carry less weight.

In the Food and Beverage industry, employees rank good wages (2.52) and tactful discipline (3.40) as top motivators. Given the fast-paced and often transient nature of the work, these preferences reflect a need for clear communication and immediate financial reward. Factors like job security (6.68) and emotional support (8.44) rank low, likely due to the industry's high turnover and performance-driven nature.

The Hotel industry presents a unique picture: while good wages rank last (8.11), factors such as good working conditions (4.44), tactful discipline (4.41), and inclusion (4.16) top the list. This suggests a strong emphasis on a positive and respectful workplace atmosphere, potentially driven by the customer service orientation of the field.

In Education, good wages (2.66) and job security (3.38) are again primary motivators, reflecting the traditionally stable yet modestly paid academic profession. Promotion (4.36) also matters, pointing to a desire for career progression within rigid institutional structures. Interpersonal motivators, such as inclusion (7.26) and sympathy (7.90), are deprioritized, possibly due to formal work hierarchies and individual-focused performance metrics.

For those in Transportation, good wages (1.00) are by far the most important factor,

followed by promotion (3.20) and appreciation (3.82). This clear emphasis on tangible rewards and recognition suggests a workforce highly motivated by advancement and acknowledgment. Personal issues like sympathy (9.68) are deemed least relevant, underscoring a task-oriented and results-driven environment.

Lastly, the Pharmaceutical industry reflects a balance between professional recognition and financial incentives. Good wages (2.80), job security (4.10), and appreciation (4.25) dominate the rankings. Meanwhile, support-oriented factors like sympathy (8.65) and personal loyalty (7.45) are ranked low, signaling a culture focused on achievement and accountability, in line with the industry's scientific rigor and regulatory scrutiny.

Across all industries, good wages consistently appear among the top motivators, reinforcing the universal importance of financial compensation. However, the prioritization of emotional or interpersonal factors varies significantly. Sectors such as health care and education, where human interaction and service are central, place some emphasis on appreciation and security, yet still deprioritize sympathy and inclusion. Conversely, industries like hospitality rank inclusion and respectful discipline highly, suggesting that interpersonal treatment is critical in service-driven contexts. The least important motivators across the board are typically sympathy, personal loyalty, and being "in on things." This may reflect a broader trend in contemporary workplaces where individual well-being is acknowledged but not always prioritized over performance metrics or organizational goals. The findings suggest that effective motivational strategies should be tailored to each industry's unique demands, balancing financial incentives with environmental and interpersonal considerations based on what workers in each field value most.

**Table 2. Top and Bottom Motivational Factors Ranked by Industry**

*This table presents the top five and the lowest-ranked (10th) motivational factor for each industry. Factors are listed in order of perceived importance (1st to 5th), based on average rank scores.*

Industries	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>
Health Care	Good Wages	Job Security	Appreciation for Work Done	Interesting Work	Promotion and Growth	Sympathetic Understanding
Financial Institutions	Good Wages	Good Working Conditions	Tactful Discipline	Promotion and Growth	Job Security	Feeling of Inclusion
Energy	Job Security	Good Wages	Appreciation for Work Done	Interesting Work	Good Working Conditions	Sympathetic Understanding
Restaurant	Good Wages	Tactful Discipline	Interesting Work	Appreciation for Work Done	Good Working Conditions	Sympathetic Understanding
Hotels	Good Wages	Promotion and Growth	Appreciation for Work Done	Job Security	Interesting Work	Sympathetic Understanding
Education	Good Wages	Job Security	Promotion and Growth	Appreciation for Work Done	Interesting Work	Sympathetic Understanding
Transportation	Good Wages	Promotion and Growth	Appreciation for Work Done	Job Security	Good Working Conditions	Sympathetic Understanding
Pharmaceutical	Good Wages	Job Security	Appreciation for Work Done	Interesting Work	Promotion and Growth	Sympathetic Understanding

**Wages as a Universal Priority**

Financial compensation emerges as the most critical motivator across nearly all sectors. Good wages are ranked first by seven of the eight industries studied, highlighting the centrality of economic incentives in employee motivation. This is particularly understandable in the context of the Philippines' economic climate, where inflation rose to 8.1% in December 2022, diminishing purchasing power and increasing the need for competitive salaries (Sprout, 2022). Regardless of occupational demands, workers evidently seek financial stability as a baseline for job satisfaction.

**Job Security: A Pillar of Stability**

While good wages dominate, job security also consistently ranks among the top five motivators. Notably, the energy sector is the only industry to place job security at the very top. This reflects the sector's long project timelines and reliance on skilled labor, where long-term employment is both expected and valued. Sectors such as education, health care, and pharmaceuticals also give job security high importance, likely due to their institutional structure and professional specialization. This

preference signals an overarching employee desire for stability in uncertain economic times.

**Recognition and Growth: Driving Engagement**

Across the board, appreciation for work done ranks highly—frequently appearing in the top three to five. In sectors such as health care, education, and pharmaceuticals, which demand high emotional and cognitive labor, recognition plays a crucial role in maintaining morale and preventing burnout. Similarly, promotion and growth opportunities consistently rank in the top five for most industries. This demonstrates that employees are not only concerned with their current status but are also motivated by the potential for advancement and career development. Sectors like transportation and hotels, where career ladders may be more transparent or tiered, show especially strong interest in upward mobility.

**Contextual Priorities and Workplace Culture**

Some motivational factors show elevated importance in specific industries due to the unique nature of the work. For example, tactful discipline is a top-three motivator in financial

institutions and restaurants, suggesting that in fast-paced or rules-driven environments, how discipline is administered affects morale and productivity. In contrast, good working conditions receive notable emphasis in financial institutions, restaurants, and transportation, where the physical and operational environment significantly shapes daily experiences.

**Deprioritization of Emotional Support**

One of the most striking consistencies is the low ranking of sympathetic understanding of personal problems, which is the least valued motivator across all eight industries. This suggests that while emotional support might be appreciated, it is not perceived as a key driver of job satisfaction. It may also indicate cultural norms where personal and professional domains are expected to remain separate, or perhaps a perception that empathy is implicit but not incentivized or rewarded.

The variation in rankings reflects deeper structural and cultural differences among industries. In service-oriented sectors like hotels and restaurants, immediate interpersonal experiences and respect in management (e.g., tactful discipline, feeling included) take on greater significance. Meanwhile, technical or regulated industries such as pharmaceuticals and energy show a stronger focus on professional performance, job stability, and measurable outcomes. This implies that a one-size-fits-all approach to motivation is insufficient. Organizations should tailor motivational strategies not just to general trends but to the nuanced priorities of their industry and workforce. For example, boosting appreciation and providing clear growth paths may improve engagement in education or health care, while focusing on working conditions and structured recognition may be more effective in hospitality or finance.

*Table 50. Most and Least Important Motivational Factors by Industry*

*Based on average rank scores: lower scores indicate higher importance*

Industry	Most Important Factor	Least Important Factor
Health Care	Good Wages	Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problem
Financial Institutions	Good Wages	Feeling of Inclusion
Energy	Job Security	Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problem
Restaurant	Good Wages	Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problem
Hotels	Good Wages	Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problem
Education	Good Wages	Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problem
Transportation	Good Wages	Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problem
Pharmaceutical	Good Wages	Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problem

Across nearly all sectors examined, good wages emerged as the most important motivational factor, underscoring the universal appeal of financial compensation in the current labor environment. This finding aligns with long-standing global and local trends. For instance, Magkilat (2022) reported that 75% of Filipino employees prioritize salary when deciding to stay with a company. In our 2023 data, this pattern holds true in seven of the eight industries surveyed, reaffirming that financial security remains a critical driver of employee satisfaction and performance. Only one industry, Energy, breaks this trend, where job security surpasses wages in perceived importance. This deviation

likely reflects the sector’s structural dynamics. Energy companies often operate in capital-intensive, long-term projects—making consistent employment and risk mitigation more attractive to workers than immediate compensation alone.

Meanwhile, a striking consistency across industries is the low importance assigned to “Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problems,” which ranks as the least important factor in seven out of eight sectors. Even in people-centered industries such as health care, education, and hospitality, employees place far more emphasis on tangible or professional aspects of their work life. This suggests a clear

boundary between personal and professional spheres in the workplace mindset of Filipino employees. It may also reflect a cultural orientation where emotional resilience is internalized, or where workers do not expect their employers to provide personal support as a formal part of organizational life.

Further, while monetary compensation dominates broadly, subtle distinctions exist in what motivates different industry groups:

- In financial institutions, the least important factor is “feeling of being in on things.” This implies that inclusion in decision-making may carry less weight in highly hierarchical or process-driven environments, where job roles and authority are clearly defined.
- The energy industry’s prioritization of job security may stem from exposure to cyclical market risks, regulatory shifts, or safety concerns—making long-term employment more reassuring than short-term gains.
- For health care professionals, the prominence of appreciation and wages over emotional support might reflect the high demands and emotional labor of caregiving roles, where intrinsic motivation is strong, but extrinsic rewards still carry substantial weight.

Historically, motivational priorities have shifted over the decades. Earlier research found that in 1946, appreciation for work was the top motivator (Wiley), while discipline was consistently ranked lowest. By 1986,

interesting work had become the top motivator, though personal support had already fallen to the bottom. In 1992, good wages overtook all other factors and “sympathetic understanding” again appeared as least important. The current findings echo the 1992 trend, demonstrating that economic factors have grown even more influential in the 2020s, likely due to heightened inflation, job uncertainty, and increased cost of living. In the Philippine context, inflation peaked at 8.1% in December 2022—its highest rate in over a decade—which further explains the heavy emphasis on financial compensation (Sprout, 2022).

With this, employers should recognize that while emotional support and inclusion may enhance workplace culture, they do not substitute for tangible rewards. Across sectors, employees consistently signal that compensation, stability, and recognition remain the top priorities. However, to attract and retain talent long term, organizations should also consider industry-specific motivators and avoid assuming a single formula works for all. In financial and professional services, structure, clear growth paths, and fairness in discipline might enhance engagement. Service industries like hospitality may benefit from focusing on recognition and respectful treatment, even if wages are constrained. In technical or high-risk sectors such as energy, reinforcing employment stability and safety could be key to motivation.

Table 7. Additional Motivational Factors by Industry

These are non-ranked, qualitative responses shared by employees, reflecting broader motivational needs beyond the core scale.

Industry	Additional Motivational Factors
Health Care	Work Flexibility, Strong co-worker relationships
Financial Institutions	Good leadership, Benefits, Work-life balance
Energy	Trainings and seminars, Health/death insurance, Hazard pay, PPE support
Food and Beverage	Good Leadership
Hotels	Good leadership, Incentives, Training and development
Education	Uplifting self-esteem, Transparent communication, Good leadership, Retirement package, Flexible hours
Transportation	SSS, PhilHealth, PAG-IBIG, Bonus, Insurance
Pharmaceutical	Good leadership, Incentives

While traditional motivators such as wages and job security consistently rank high across sectors, the open-ended responses reveal a richer layer of motivational needs—many shaped by each industry's distinct environment, demands, and employee expectations.

### ***Emotional and Relational Needs in Health Care and Education***

Health care workers emphasized the importance of flexible scheduling and supportive peer relationships. These preferences reflect the high-pressure, emotionally taxing nature of clinical environments where burnout is a common concern. Flexible shifts or the ability to swap duties can greatly reduce stress and help maintain work-life balance—a crucial buffer against mental exhaustion (Greenhaus & Allen, 2011). Similarly, educators highlighted needs such as uplifted self-esteem, transparent organizational communication, and flexible hours. These motivators indicate a desire for affirmation, inclusion, and autonomy—needs that stem from the intellectual and emotional labor involved in teaching. Feeling competent and valued plays a central role in educators' job satisfaction (Robinson & Judge, 2019).

### ***Leadership and Culture: A Unifying Theme Across Sectors***

Across five sectors—financial institutions, hotels, education, food and beverage, and pharmaceuticals—employees cited good leadership as a key motivational factor. This widespread demand signals the importance of supervisors who recognize achievement, communicate transparently, and cultivate trust. In customer-facing industries like food and beverage or hospitality, strong leadership translates directly into service quality and team morale (Richard & Smith, 2017). In highly structured or competitive environments such as finance or pharma, leadership becomes essential for aligning personal performance with organizational goals, as well as for retaining top talent (Armstrong, 2023; Yukl, 2013).

### ***Risk Compensation and Safety Assurance in High-Hazard Sectors***

Employees in the energy and transportation sectors revealed priorities that differ markedly from office-based environments. In energy, where work involves high voltage systems and heavy machinery, motivation is driven by hazard pay, insurance coverage, PPE availability, and technical training. These incentives not only reward skill and endurance but also signal employer accountability in dangerous work settings (Smith & Jones, 2016). Likewise, transportation workers emphasized government-mandated benefits such as SSS, PhilHealth, and PAG-IBIG, along with bonuses and insurance. These safety nets are crucial for roles that involve physical risk, long hours, and operational pressure. Financial protection in case of accidents or illness contributes to peace of mind and long-term job satisfaction (Pfeffer, 2018).

### ***Training, Development, and Long-Term Value***

In sectors such as hotels and energy, employees cited training and development as key motivators. These programs support both immediate job performance and long-term career growth. The opportunity to gain new skills fosters engagement, reinforces a sense of purpose, and signals that the organization is willing to invest in its people (Boella & Goss-Turner, 2013). For hotel employees in particular, this aligns with industry expectations for service excellence and upward mobility.

### ***Wellness, Benefits, and Incentives in High-Pressure Fields***

Pharmaceutical employees pointed to performance-based incentives and comprehensive benefits packages as major motivators. These reflect the intensity of work environments characterized by targets, compliance, and scientific rigor. In such fields, aligning rewards with output reinforces performance while offering employees a sense of security and appreciation. Robust health and retirement benefits reduce stress and contribute to retention (Yukl, 2013).

In summary, what motivates employees varies not just by industry type, but by the nature of work risks, structure, and emotional load: Caregiving and education sectors prioritize emotional support, flexibility, and communication. Risk-heavy industries such as energy and transportation demand tangible safety and financial security. Performance-driven environments in finance, pharma, and hospitality

emphasize leadership, recognition, and growth pathways. Understanding these nuanced needs is critical for organizations aiming to design effective, context-sensitive engagement and retention strategies. Rather than a one-size-fits-all approach, motivation must be cultivated through a customized blend of financial, professional, and emotional drivers tailored to each sector’s realities.

Table 8. Test of significant relationship if socio-demographic profile of respondents such age, sex, years of service, work status (part-time, temporary, and permanent) has a greater relationship towards employees motivation.

**Health Care**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Years of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Significant	Not Significant	Significant	Significant
Job Security	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Interesting Work	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Good Working Conditions	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Tactful Discipline	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant

All significance levels were determined using the Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). P-values were  $\leq 0.05$  for all significant outcomes.

**Age as a Factor**

Motivational factors were significantly influenced by respondents’ age. This may be due to shifting priorities at different life stages. Older employees may prioritize job stability, loyalty, and benefits, while younger workers may value interesting work and growth opportunities. As Bhouamet (2011) points out, career coaching strategies should be tailored to retain both younger talent and aging employees by recognizing these evolving needs.

**Sex Differences in Motivation**

Sex was a significant differentiator for all motivational factors—except Good Wages. This implies wage satisfaction is a universally shared concern, regardless of gender. However,

Vaskova (2006) notes that males often lean toward instrumental values (such as pay and bonuses), whereas women are typically more motivated by relational values like respect, empathy, and work-life balance. These differences should inform gender-sensitive management strategies, especially in industries with skewed gender distributions.

**Influence of Years of Service**

Tenure significantly affected all motivational factors. Longer-serving employees, as Suliman (2001) suggests, are not only more committed but also perform better due to familiarity with organizational culture and systems. They tend to prioritize stability and recognition, while newer employees may focus

more on learning opportunities and job conditions. Retention programs should therefore vary according to tenure groups.

**Employment Status Impact**

All motivational dimensions were significantly associated with employment status. This may reflect disparities in job security, benefits,

and involvement between regular and contractual workers. Atienza (2011) emphasizes that regular employees offer institutional memory and motivation for others, yet the needs of probationary and contractual staff—often overlooked—must be addressed to prevent disengagement and high turnover.

**Financial Institutions**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Years of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Job Security	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Interesting Work	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Good Working Conditions	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Tactful Discipline	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

All significance levels were determined using the Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). P-values were  $\leq 0.05$  for all significant outcomes.

**Good Wages: The Only Universally Significant Factor**

The only motivational factor significantly associated with all four socio-demographic variables (age, sex, years of service, and employment status) was Good Wages. Age: Older workers may prioritize salary due to family obligations or nearing retirement, while younger employees view it as a marker of job value. Sex: Both males and females see wages as central, though for different reasons—men for status, women potentially for security (Vaskova, 2006). Years of Service: Senior employees may expect wage increases aligned with tenure, while newer employees may view competitive pay as a reason to stay. Employment Status: Contractual and probationary workers may especially value fair compensation due to job insecurity. This strong consensus reinforces that wage competitiveness is universally crucial across demographics, especially in a high-inflation economic context (Sprout, 2022).

**Job Security: Age-Dependent Importance**

Only Age showed a statistically significant association with Job Security. Older workers may prioritize long-term stability over other perks or growth opportunities. However, job security was not significant for sex, tenure, or employment status—suggesting these groups may see it as a baseline expectation rather than a differentiator.

**Other Motivational Factors: No Significant Differences**

All remaining motivational dimensions (e.g., appreciation, growth, working conditions, interpersonal factors) showed no statistically significant relationship with any of the demographic variables. This result may indicate: A universal valuation of these factors across demographic groups (i.e., all employees rate them similarly). Or, the factors may be secondary motivators, important but not strongly influenced by background characteristics.

**Energy**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Years of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Significant	Not Significant	Significant	Significant
Job Security	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Interesting Work	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Good Working Conditions	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Tactful Discipline	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant

All significance levels were determined using the Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). P-values were  $\leq 0.05$  for all significant outcomes.

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**Other Motivational Factors: No Significant Differences**

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**Good Wages** was only significant for **length of service** and **employment status**, implying that monetary concerns intensify with tenure and job security.

**Job Security** and **most other intrinsic/extrinsic motivators** showed significance across all demographics, indicating they are broadly relevant and influenced by multiple personal characteristics.

**Age** was not significant for appreciation, interesting work, or good wages—suggesting intrinsic motivation may not shift dramatically across age groups.

**Sex** showed more influence on interpersonal and growth-related factors, reflecting differing gender-based value orientations in motivation.

**Length of Service** emerged as a consistently significant variable, highlighting the evolving motivational landscape as tenure increases.

**Employment Status** (e.g., full-time vs. part-time) strongly affected almost all motivational factors—supporting Omulo’s (2017) findings that stability breeds higher motivation

**Food and Beverage**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Length of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Not Significant	Not Significant	Significant	Significant
Job Security	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Not Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Interesting Work	Not Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Good Working Conditions	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Tactful Discipline	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant

**Hotels**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Length of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Job Security	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Interesting Work	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Good Working Conditions	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Tactful Discipline	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Significant

All significance levels were determined using the Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). P-values were  $\leq 0.05$  for all significant outcomes.

Age is the most influential demographic variable, all 10 motivational factors showed statistically significant variation across age groups. This suggests that employees' values and workplace priorities evolve with age. For example, younger workers may prioritize career growth and interesting work, while older employees may value job security or understanding from management.

Sex also shows consistent influence, 9 out of 10 factors were significantly different across male and female employees. This supports research indicating gender-based motivational

differences: males may value instrumental rewards (e.g., wages), while females may emphasize relational or intrinsic motivators (e.g., appreciation, work-life balance).

Length of Service had no significant effect across all factors. This implies that employee motivations do not vary much with tenure, which could indicate a stable organizational culture or uniform treatment regardless of experience level. It may also suggest that organizations do not differentiate incentives or motivational approaches based on how long someone has been employed.

Employment Status showed a significant effect on 9 out of 10 factors, with only "Interesting Work" being unaffected. Full-time employees might experience more structured

support systems, recognition, or growth opportunities than their part-time or contractual counterparts.

**Education**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Length of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Job Security	Significant	Not Significant	Significant	Not Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Interesting Work	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Good Working Conditions	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Tactful Discipline	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

All significance levels were determined using the Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). P-values were  $\leq 0.05$  for all significant outcomes.

Age is the most influential variable, significantly affects both "Good Wages" and "Job Security." This implies that employee motivation changes with age, particularly regarding financial compensation and employment stability. Older employees may place more value on stable income and job security as they progress in their careers, aligning with life-stage needs such as supporting families or preparing for retirement.

Length of Service Matters for Job Security, only "Job Security" is significantly associated with length of service. Longer-tenured employees may expect job stability as a reward for loyalty, which influences their motivation more than other factors. However, tenure does not appear to impact perceptions of wages, growth, or recognition.

Sex and Employment Status Do Not Significantly Influence Any Motivational Factor. Surprisingly, neither gender nor employment status significantly affect any of the motivational factors. This suggests a generally uniform approach in workplace treatment across these categories, or possibly a lack of tailored policies

based on gender or employment classification (e.g., full-time vs part-time).

No Universal Motivator Across All Groups, only two factors (Good Wages, Job Security) showed any significant socio-demographic impact. Other commonly cited motivators—like recognition, growth, working conditions, or feeling valued—were not significantly influenced by any demographic variables.

Sex as a Key Demographic Influencer, Sex showed significance in three factors: Good Wages, Job Security, and Promotion and Growth in the Organization. This suggests gender-based perceptual differences: Males may prioritize financial and career advancement factors more. Females may be influenced differently or value more interpersonal or stability-related motivators.

Length of Service Influences Job Security and Recognition. In Job Security and Appreciation for Work Done were significantly related to length of service, longer tenure likely fosters expectations for stability and recognition. Employees who have remained longer in the organization may interpret continued

service as a contribution deserving of appreciation.

Employment Status Has Limited but Specific Impact, only one factor—Feeling of “Being in on Things”—was significantly affected by employment status. This may reflect that permanent employees feel more involved in organizational decisions or communication loops than contractual or part-time staff. Inclusion

and transparency may be tied to formal employment tiers.

Age Has No Significant Impact Across All Factors, surprisingly, age was not significantly associated with any motivational factor. This may indicate that motivations are shaped more by employment dynamics and personal perceptions than by generational expectations in this sample.

**Transportation**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Length of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Not Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Job Security	Not Significant	Significant	Significant	Not Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Not Significant	Not Significant	Significant	Not Significant
Interesting Work	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Not Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Good Working Conditions	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Tactful Discipline	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

All significance levels were determined using the Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). P-values were  $\leq 0.05$  for all significant outcomes.

**Pharmaceutical**

Motivational Factors	Age	Sex	Length of Service	Employment Status
Good Wages	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Job Security	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Appreciation for Work Done	Not Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Interesting Work	Not Significant	Significant	Significant	Significant
Promotion and Growth in the Organization	Not Significant	Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Good Working Conditions	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Feeling of Inclusion	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Significant
Personal Loyalty to Employees	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Tactful Discipline	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant
Sympathetic Understanding	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant	Not Significant

All significance levels were determined using the Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ). P-values were  $\leq 0.05$  for all significant outcomes.

Age as a Factor Significantly influences Good Wages Job Security. Older employees may

prioritize financial stability and employment security, aligning with typical life-stage needs

such as family support, mortgages, or retirement planning. Younger workers may not yet place high importance on these factors, which could explain the age-based variation.

Sex as a Factor Significantly influences Appreciation for Work Done, Interesting Work, and Promotion and Growth. These results suggest gender-based differences in motivational priorities. Women may place higher value on recognition, career advancement, and engaging work, possibly due to workplace dynamics that often challenge their advancement. These findings are consistent with prior research showing that interpersonal dynamics and recognition are particularly motivating for women.

Length of Service as a Factor Significantly influences Appreciation for Work Done and Interesting Work. Long-tenured employees tend to expect acknowledgment and more engaging tasks to remain motivated. Without recognition or challenge, experienced employees may feel stagnant or undervalued. These employees likely equate tenure with increased value and seek affirmation of that value.

Employment Status as a Factor Significantly influences Appreciation for Work Done, Interesting Work, and Feeling of “Being in on Things”. Permanent employees may receive more acknowledgment and inclusion in company decisions. In contrast, temporary or part-time staff may feel marginalized, which could hurt morale and performance. Ensuring all employees feel included and recognized regardless of contract type can positively impact workplace culture.

Motivational Factors with No Significant Impact from Any Demographic as to Good Working Conditions, Personal Loyalty to Employees, Tactful Discipline, and Sympathetic Understanding of Personal Problems. These factors may be viewed as basic expectations rather than true motivators. Employees may assume such conditions should be universally present, thus they do not significantly influence motivation unless absent. Alternatively, these may be equally valued across all demographic groups, leading to a lack of variation.

## Conclusions

This study reveals that while financial compensation remains a major motivator, it is not

the only factor influencing employee engagement and satisfaction. Across most industries, good wages ranked highest, affirming the importance of fair and competitive pay. However, variations exist—most notably in the energy industry, where job security emerged as the top motivational factor. This finding highlights that motivation is industry-specific and influenced by the nature of work and employment conditions. In contrast, sympathetic understanding or assistance with personal problems consistently ranked lowest, suggesting that while emotional support is appreciated, it is typically secondary to more tangible motivators like salary, stability, and career progression. Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of adopting a balanced and context-sensitive approach to employee motivation—one that integrates both extrinsic and intrinsic factors to support workforce retention and performance.

## Recommendations

To create a well-motivated, productive, and loyal workforce, employers should consider a multifaceted strategy that goes beyond salary alone:

1. Compensation and Benefits
  - Regularly benchmark salaries against industry standards to remain competitive.
  - Adjust wages based on inflation and cost of living to preserve purchasing power.
  - Offer comprehensive benefits packages, including healthcare, paid leave, and retirement plans.
  - Provide flexible benefits to meet diverse employee needs (e.g., educational assistance, childcare support).
2. Career Development and Advancement
  - Establish clear pathways for promotion and career growth.
  - Invest in employee training, upskilling, and professional development programs.
  - Encourage goal setting and provide resources for continuous learning.
3. Recognition and Appreciation
  - Create systems for recognizing achievements and contributions, both formally and informally.

- Foster a culture of appreciation through employee-of-the-month programs, thank-you notes, or performance bonuses.
4. Leadership and Communication
    - Promote open, respectful, and transparent communication between management and staff.
    - Train leaders in motivational management practices that foster trust, inclusion, and accountability.
    - Involve employees in decision-making processes to increase their sense of ownership.
  5. Workplace Conditions
    - Improve physical working conditions to ensure safety, comfort, and efficiency.
    - Support work-life balance through flexible work arrangements where possible.
    - Create an inclusive and respectful environment that supports collaboration and team cohesion

By implementing these strategies, organizations can enhance both individual performance and overall organizational success, adapting to the unique motivational needs of their workforce across different sectors

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