Motivation and Job Satisfaction Amongst Pilots in the Civil Aviation Industry in India

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Abstract

The objective of the present study was *to find out the critical factors for motivation and job satisfaction and to study the extent of these factors present in Civil Aviation pilots.* Owing to the fact that before one sets out for the survey he/she should have a thorough knowledge of the topic he/ she is assigned with, as a survey person, the researcher spent considerable time in studying the factors and work situations involved in a pilot's job. Respondent's interaction was with the help of a questionnaire. Findings revealed that pilots are in the flight operations management based on flying experience and have no clue about administration and management leading to disgruntlement among other pilots. Hence there must be proper parameters and training involved before selecting pilots to manage flight operations.

Key words: Civil Aviation, Pilots, Motivation

Introduction

India's aviation industry has expanded dramatically in recent years with the entry of a host of new budget carriers. But losses sustained by many of these airlines, are now prompting consolidation in the industry. India's liberalization of the aviation sector has opened up 28 airports for foreign direct investment (FDI) in areas of operation and maintenance of airports.

For Greenfield airports, FDI up to 100 per cent is permitted through automatic approvals. For existing airports, FDI up to 74 per cent is permitted through automatic approvals and up to 100 per cent through special permission (from FIPB).

Growing at a rate of 18 per cent annually, the Indian civil aviation market holds great promise for potential investors. International no-frills budget carriers, especially Asian low-cost carriers (LCCs) are also making a beeline for India. Pilots are highly trained professionals who fly airplanes or helicopters to carry out a wide variety of tasks. Most are *airline pilots*, *copilots*, and *flight engineers* who transport passengers and cargo. However, 34 percent are commercial pilots involved in dusting crops, spreading seed for reforestation, testing aircraft, flying passengers and cargo to areas not served by regular airlines, directing firefighting efforts, tracking criminals, monitoring traffic, and rescuing and evacuating injured persons.

The research offers a starting point to think about the actual work conditions and their

changes in order to provide a basis for a higher motivation of employees. Not only differences and similarities in the work motivation and satisfaction of employees regarding certain individual characteristics, but also the reasons for the same will be examined in this study.

Objectives of the Study

1. *To find out the most critical factors for motivation and job satisfaction.*

2. *To study the extent of these factors present in Civil Aviation pilots*

Literature review

The Job Characteristics Model by Hackman and Oldham (1980) deals with the structure of work which will lead to high internal motivation, high job satisfaction and high work

effectiveness. This model considers the intrinsic motivation that causes a person to perform the job well due to interests on the work and challenges in the job.

Conditions for internal motivation: The occurrence of internal motivation is caused by three basic conditions. These conditions influence not only an employee's motivation to work, but also his/her satisfaction on the job. First, the individual must have knowledge of the results of his/her work performance. In other words, if the individual has no idea about how well or poorly he/she is performing the job, he/she will not develop any feelings such as happiness or sadness about his/her job performance. Secondly, the person must feel responsible and accountable for the results of his/her work.
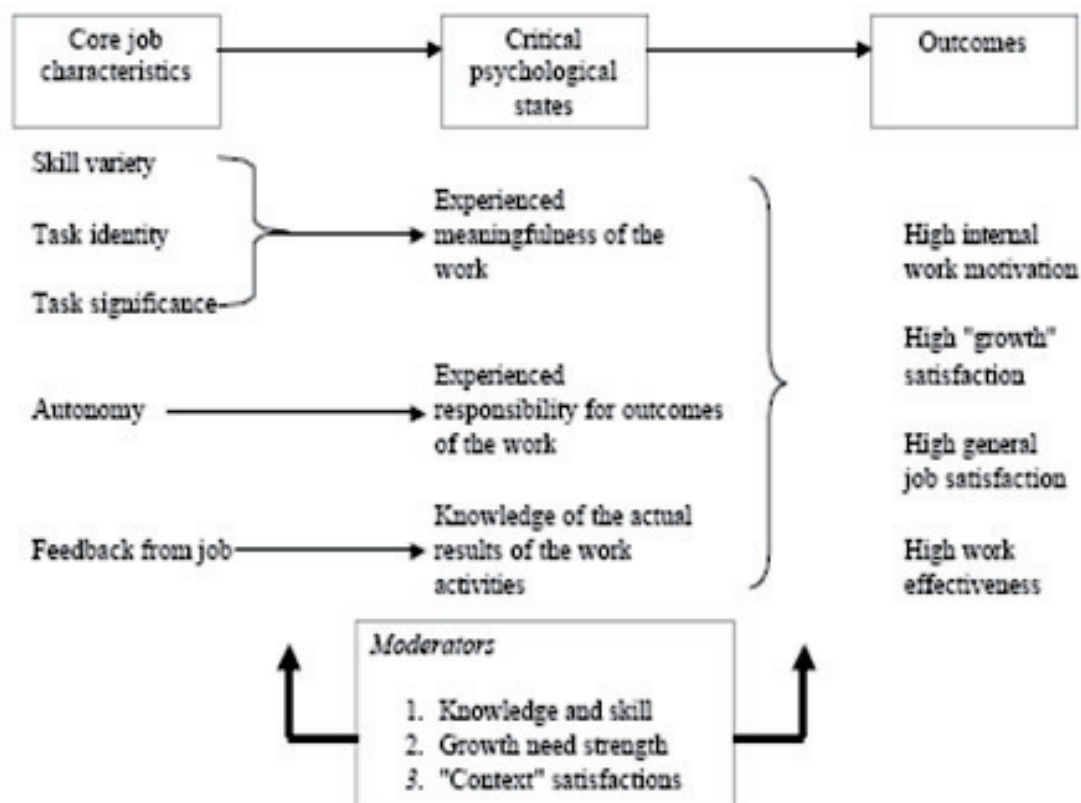

Figure 1: Showing outcomes of enriched work

From Figure 1 above, it is clear that when a person thinks that his/her own efforts contribute only to a minor extent to the quality of his/her work outcome, the individual will not generate any feelings such as pride or sadness towards the quality of work done. Third, the person must experience work as meaningful. In other words, if the individual does not perceive his/her work as generally important, valuable and worthwhile, he/she will not develop any internal motivation. Even when a person feels responsible for the work done and receives information about his/her performance, but lacks the feeling for doing a meaningful job, the internal motivation will unlikely to develop.

In other words, if one of these conditions is missing the internal motivation will not occur. All three factors - knowledge of results, experienced responsibility and experienced meaningfulness - are necessary to develop and sustain a strong internal work motivation. Moreover, the stronger these factors are present, the higher the internal motivation.

Methodology

The questionnaire method was used to collect data about motivation and work amongst pilots. It was based on the job description questionnaire created by Hackman and Oldham (1980) and was addressed to 45 pilots working in the civil aviation industry across India. The factors examined in this study were analyzed according to individual characteristics of the sample - age, gender, marital status, position in the company, and the years in the company.

Hypothesis

1. Characteristics of Job such as **autonomy, feedback** and **Job security** are not present in a pilot's job.

2. Profit sharing benefit is perceived as the most important benefit because it promotes a feeling of belongingness.

Table 1: Showing importance of the job factors regarding age

AGE (group)	TASK SIGNIFICANCE	AUTONOMY	SKILLS VARIETY	ENVIRONMENT	JOB SECURITY	TASK IDENTITY	FEEDBACK	COMPENSATION
<=30	4.646	4.625	4.406	4.250	4.063	3.813	3.781	4.094
31-45	4.741	4.778	4.389	4.185	4.111	4.000	3.833	3.611
>=46	4.333	4.316	3.688	3.883	3.550	3.895	3.575	4.100

TASK SIGNIFICANCE, AUTONOMY, SKILLS VARIETY, ENVIRONMENT, JOB SECURITY, TASK IDENTITY, FEEDBACK and COMPENSATION broken down by AGE (group).

Table 2: Showing importance of the job factors regarding marital status

MARITAL STATUS	TASK SIGNIFICANCE	AUTONOMY	SKILLS VARIETY	ENVIRONMENT	COMPENSATION	JOB SECURITY	TASK IDENTITY	FEEDBACK
Married	4.460	4.500	3.937	3.977	3.966	3.759	3.964	3.741
Unmarried	4.646	4.563	4.349	4.250	4.063	4.000	3.750	3.625

AUTONOMY, COMPENSATION, ENVIRONMENT, FEEDBACK, JOB SECURITY, SKILLS VARIETY, TASK IDENTITY and TASK SIGNIFICANCE broken down by MARITAL STATUS.

Results

Older people experience the need for more responsibility for the outcomes of the work (autonomy). People between the age brackets of 31-45 years have a high need to display different kinds of skill sets. Hence **task significance leads in turn to a higher internal work motivation and satisfaction with the work, which does not depend on age.**

Unmarried people evaluated the job factors, even if only to a minor extent, higher than married. Referring to Hackman and Oldham's model, it is interesting to note that unmarried people perceive the use of a variety of skills, autonomy, and the significance of the tasks in their job to a higher extent than married people. Nevertheless, these differences are less than 1, and therefore it may be noted here that unmarried persons experience all factors similar to married people. Furthermore, **married and unmarried persons evaluated the extent to which feedback is present at work as similar.**

Table 3: Showing importance of the job factors regarding years in a company

EXPERIENCE (in present company)	TASK SIGNIFICANCE	AUTONOMY	SKILLS VARIETY	COMPENSATION	ENVIRONMENT	JOB SECURITY	FEEDBACK	TASK IDENTITY
Up to 2 years	4.563	4.563	4.188	4.156	4.208	3.875	3.750	3.750
2 - 5 years	4.567	4.556	4.050	4.350	4.100	4.500	3.850	4.100
5 - 10 years	4.375	4.375	3.891	3.688	3.833	3.438	3.500	3.867
More than 1..	5.000	5.000	4.667	3.667	4.556	3.667	4.000	4.000

AUTONOMY, COMPENSATION, ENVIRONMENT, FEEDBACK, JOB SECURITY, SKILLS VARIETY, TASK IDENTITY and TASK SIGNIFICANCE broken down by EXPERIENCE (in present company).
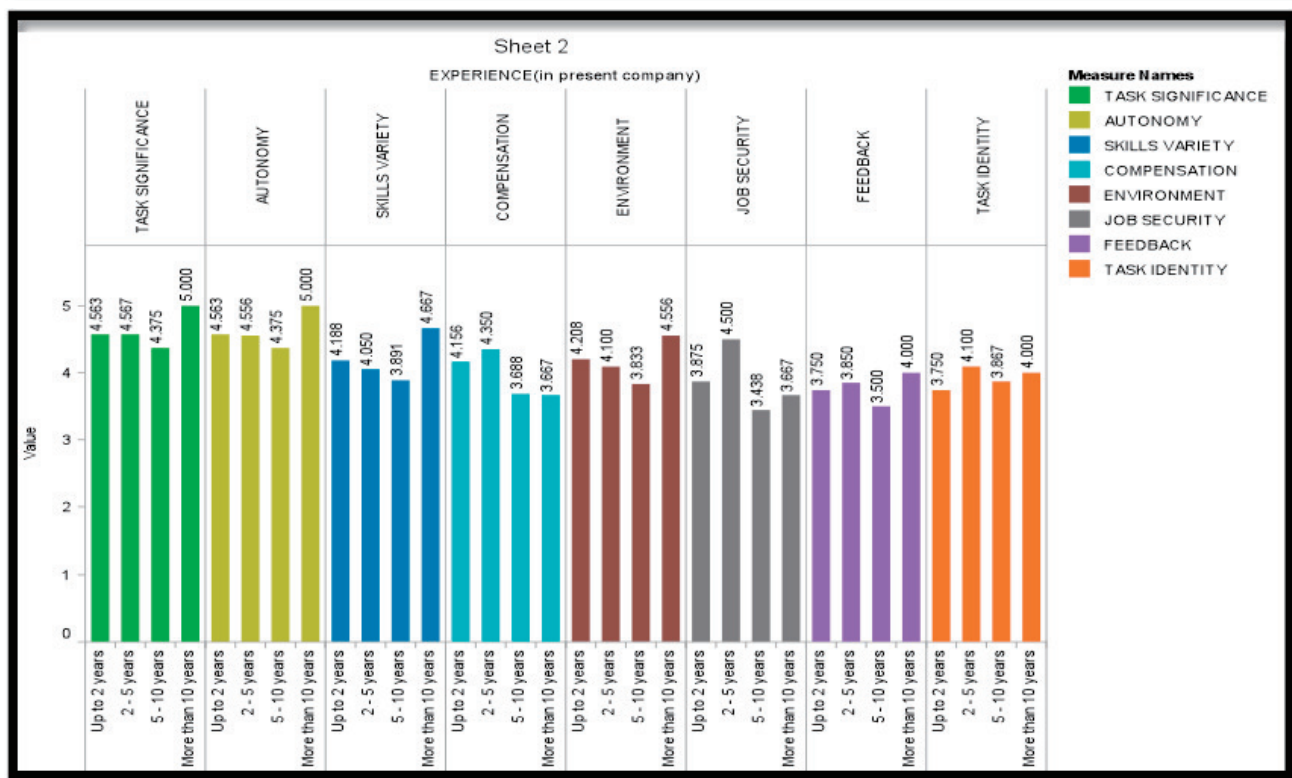

Figure 2: Showing importance of the job factors regarding years in a company

Years in Company (Mean of importance of job factors regarding years in a company**)**

When the responses were analyzed with regard to the years people have been working in the company, some interesting findings can be seen. People with more than 10 years in the company give importance to a variety of skills, and the meaningfulness and interest of the job. **Comparing the variety of skills, autonomy, and task significance regarding the years in the company, it may be noticed that these three dimensions show major differences in**

the range from up to 2 years to 10 years.

POSITION IN A COMPANY (Mean of importance of the job factors regarding position in a company**)**

In the above figure red indicates less importance and green indicates high importance. The received data shows a clear tendency that Sr. Commanders and Airline Examiners perceive **Feedback, job security and environment** job factors to a low extent for satisfaction than First officers and Captains. In particular, weak

Table 4: Showing importance of the job factors regarding position in a company

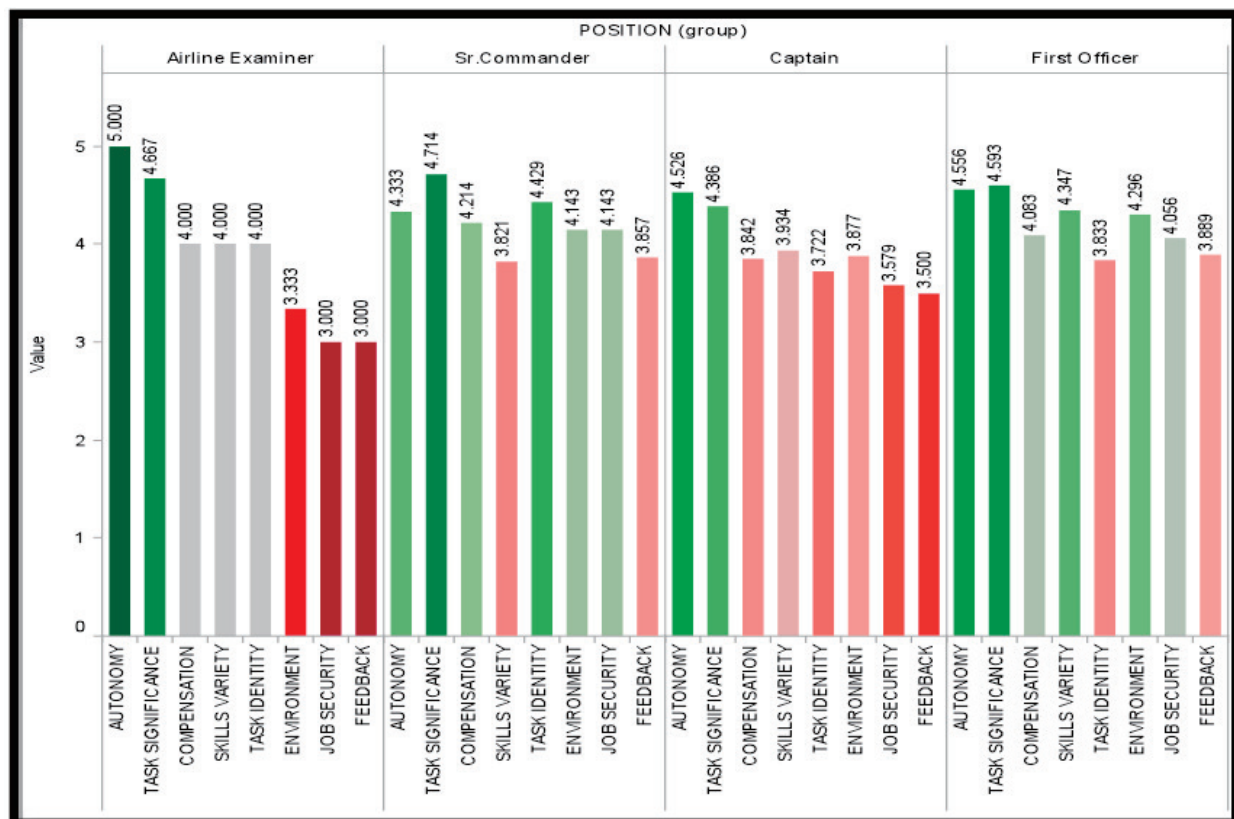| POSITION (group)	AUTONOMY	TASK SIGNIFICANCE	COMPENSATION	SKILLS VARIETY	TASK IDENTITY	ENVIRONMENT	JOB SECURITY	FEEDBACK
Airline Exam..	5.000	4.667	4.000	4.000	4.000	3.333	3.000	3.000
Sr.Comman..	4.333	4.714	4.214	3.821	4.429	4.143	4.143	3.857
Captain	4.526	4.386	3.842	3.934	3.722	3.877	3.579	3.500
First Officer	4.556	4.593	4.083	4.347	3.833	4.296	4.056	3.889

Figure 3: Showing importance of the job factors regarding position in a company

differences can be noticed in skills and task significance. Comparing the intrinsic job factors according to the actual work situation, the following can be stated. **Skill variety, task identity, and task significance, which contribute to the feeling of doing a meaningful job, are to a large extent, perceived as high by all Pilots.**

promotes a feeling of belongingness. The above results prove hypothesis two incorrect. Taking into consideration the comparative strength of all factors – economic rewards, sports, and food - and their degree of fulfillment, it may be noted here that there is very little difference on how the pilots perceive the benefits and other extrinsic factors. However, high importance is
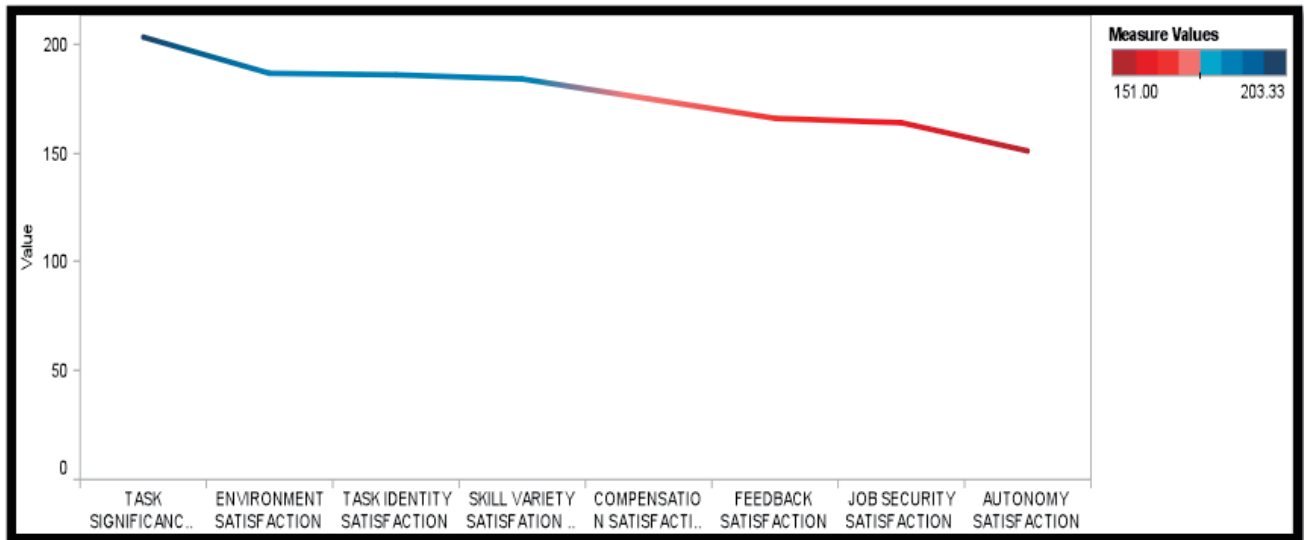

Figure 3: Showing satisfaction level with regard to meaningfulness of work and characteristics of job (The color blue indicates high level of satisfaction and the color red indicates low level of satisfaction)

Hypothesis 1: Characteristics of Job such as **autonomy, feedback** and **Job security** are not present in a Pilot's job to a large extent.

The above results prove the above hypothesis correct. The data reveals that pilots are satisfied and motivated in their work because of meaningfulness of work in their current jobs. On the other hand characteristics of Job (i.e. Autonomy, feedback, Job security) are missing in their current jobs and hence are perceived as low on satisfaction level.

Hypothesis 2: Profit sharing benefit is perceived as the most important benefit because it

given **to work related benefits such as uniform benefits, transportation and lodging.**

Conclusions

Since the strongest motivators seem to be things that people value but lack, the following motivators can be identified in order to increase the internal motivation and job satisfaction for the respective subgroups.

(1) The strongest motivator regarding all subgroups is the **Task significance**. Therefore, special attention should be given to that factor in order to increase the internal motivation and job satisfaction.

(2) Characteristics of Job such as **autonomy, feedback** and **Job security** are not present in the job and can be used as a leverage to

increase internal motivation.

(3) One should have in mind that the environment and compensation do not actually present motivators. However, their fulfillment to a certain extent provides the basis for taking advantage of challenges in the job and to reduce job dissatisfaction.

(4) In addition, special attention should be given to the skill aspect and the autonomy, since they make a contribution to the well being of humans and provide the basis for the use of challenges offered by the job.

(5) Furthermore, all factors examined in this study contribute to the organizational commitment of employees. The intrinsic factors, on the one hand, may influence a person's willingness to expend considerable efforts toward the goals of the company and to remain in the company (attitudinal commitment).

(6) The extrinsic factors, on the other hand, may contribute to the behavioral commitment. Factors external to the work situation such as the economic situation, mobility, and other employers may influence an individual's desire to stay in the company as well.

Suggestions Given By Respondents

NEED	SUGGESTIONS
SELF-ACTUALIZATION	1. Qualifications and talents are under utilized 2. To become part of the solutions to the problems faced by the Company.
ESTEEM	1. Assured career progression in term of upgrades. 2. Company must make pilots feel that they are part and contributing to company.
SOCIAL	1. Need time for quality life. 2. Loyalty bonus should be given at periodic intervals and should increase with length of good service record.
SAFETY	1. Confirmed family tickets 2. Assured increments 3. Seniority allowance 4. Family health insurance 5. Equal work contract for people serving in same positions. 6. Pension plan 7. Medical Insurance 8. Alternate Work position in case of Loss of License due medical or other reasons
PHYSIOLOGICAL	1. More pay 2. Home loan

Researcher's Recommendations

The results of this research offers a starting point to think about the actual work conditions and their changes in order to provide a basis for a higher motivation of pilots. Moreover, factors that have to be enhanced at work in order to increase the motivation and therefore the commitment toward the company are figured out and presented. It can be concluded that:

1. **Better communication**: Pilots are normally never aware of behind the walls activity of Aviation Corporate. The contribution from fellow workers would become meaningful if they were to become part of the solutions to the problems faced by the Company. To achieve this, a regular company bulletin should be released regularly for transparent working and information sharing. An authorized Information agency, which disseminates verified information, would stop all rumor mongering and lead to reinforcing of genuine working relationship and healthy camaraderie. Monetary growth without creation of Goodwill bank is meaningless.

2. **Improvement of procedures/parameters involving selection of Pilots in to management**: A commercial pilot is paid well, and there are enough checks and balances within the system to ensure smooth and safe operations. However generally Pilots are in the flight operations management based on flying experience and have no clue about administration and management leading to disgruntlement among other pilots. Hence there must be proper parameters and training involved before selecting pilots to manage flight operations.

3. **Environment**: The work place environment needs to inspire trust among employees. Very often Airline management and pilots have a relationship of mistrust, which is somewhat antagonistic. Quite a few airlines work under a fear culture where the pilot is constantly under pressure of punitive action for the smallest infringement, which does not necessarily contribute to a healthy work environment.

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