

## EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN GHANA: A FACTOR STRUCTURE AND A MEASUREMENT TOOL

*BB Puplambu, University of Ghana Business School, Legon, Ghana*

**Purpose:** This paper reports research on the factor structure of employee motivation as well as provides a tool for measuring the level of employee motivation in Ghanaian organisations.

**Methodology:** The study was designed as exploratory, comparative and cross-sectional. 260 respondents drawn from across the gender, status and job grade hierarchy of 19 organisations participated. The organisations were matched in terms of tenure (over 5 years), number of employees (50 or more) and geographic location (headquartered in Accra). A 41-item questionnaire on the Level of Motivation (LoM); Characteristics of Employee Motivation (CEM); aspects of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB); Managerial Assumptions about employee behaviour (MA); Contextual Institutional Analysis (IAN) and Organisational Leadership Issues (Le) was developed and used. The instrument combined fixed response format on a 3-point scale with open-ended responses.

**Findings:** Exploratory Factor Analyses (Varimax Rotation, converging in 26 iterations) yielded 6 factors, which account for 60% of the variance. Thematic analyses of both interview and open-ended questionnaire data support the emergent factor structure, providing some tentative indication that employee motivation in the Ghanaian (or indeed African) context should be looked at more in an integrated manner rather than in terms of the limiting confines of any one theory of motivation. The 3 items hypothesised to constitute the measure of level of employee motivation loaded neatly onto Factor 6. One-way ANOVA demonstrated no differences in the level of motivation across the organisational samples; this was confirmed by the interview data.

**Implications/Originality/Value:** The implications and value of this research are: that motivation research in Africa does need to focus more on developing an integrated model of employee motivation; also, a simple 3-item but novel tool for measuring the level of employee motivation as well as its underlying dynamics, is tentatively put forward. This, in the Ghanaian context, is a much needed psychometric.

**Key words and phrases:** Employee motivation, Ghana, factor structure, level of motivation

### INTRODUCTION

Wood (2000:317) has celebrated the diversity in the area of work motivation, noting that new conceptual ideas such as social identity, motivational traits, person-environment fit, cognitive process dimensions of motivation, etc. are all being used to enrich the motivation debate. Wood's thoughts were stated in the context of a special issue on work motivation of one of the respected journals in the behavioural sciences (Applied Psychology: An International Review). Significantly, however, none of the papers in that Special Issue represented work on motivation in Africa. To date, there is still no coherent statement of theory on work motivation that is indigenous to Africa. This is a disturbing reality. From the work of researchers like Kuada (1994:30), Munene (1995:291), Carr and others of the Afrocentric Alliance (2001:59) and Puplambu (2005:247; 2006), it is obvious that the dynamics of occupational life, the employment exchange and institutional culture in many parts of Africa, could be described as qualitatively different from the Western experience. In this regard, it seems reasonable to suggest that the time is right for a concerted effort at understanding the work motivation dynamics in African countries.

### LITERATURE REVIEW & BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

To place this study in proper context, this section briefly reviews some work in the area of motivation theory and research, expands on the notion of the 'African Context' as it relates to organisational life, and makes the case for a grounded approach to theory development in the area of work motivation in Africa.

**Work Motivation: The Context Argument**

That contextual variables are key to behaviour has long been accepted by psychologists and social scientists (Capelli & Sherer, 1991:56). Context in this sense ranges from proximate parameters such as direct family circumstances, to distal nuances such as national culture and or economic possibilities. Mowday and Sutton (1993:195-200) suggest three ways in which context impacts experience and behaviour: firstly in terms of the opportunities and constraints offered to individuals; secondly in terms of the time and space parameters such as recency and physical proximity of events; thirdly, context also impacts through group composition, values, demographics, etc. The reality of motivation theorising is that much of the conceptualisation and initial research testing of dominant theoretical frames is Western (typically, American), and one dares say that many researchers have been guilty of wholesale testing and application of these frames to contexts far removed from the point of initial formulation. Perhaps the way to truncate this trend is to rethink the discourse and work on indigenous psychologies – from a grounded perspective.

Haslam, Powell and Turner (2000:319-320) suggest that the need-based approaches to work motivation have been very central to effort to understand worker behaviour dynamics. They, however, note that there is still not much agreement about the interplay between various needs, their ascendance and resolution. Their research points to the possibility that no one “*level of need is inherently more relevant to employee motivation than any other (Haslam, Powell & Turner, 2000:320).*”

They further argue that group-based needs are acquiring a centre stage role in the motivational dynamics of people. In this regard, they adopt Social Identity and Self Categorisation as theoretical frames with which to examine motivated behaviour. Group-based needs are loosely defined to indicate those sets of preferred outcomes that are context sensitive and context driven largely from the self being identified as a member of a particular group or context. This identification with a certain context then mandates the individual to seek those outcomes, which support things like group pride and group stature above other groups. A related argument that they make which has salience for this paper is that:

*In contemporary Western society, the physiological and safety needs of most workers are satisfied and this means that their behaviour is more commonly motivated by higher-order needs (Haslam, Powell & Turner, 2000:322).*

From a purely intellectual perspective, this may well imply that there may be an equivalent shift in the theoretical and research effort directed at understanding and explaining motivation at work – in the western arena. As tends to happen, such shifts, reported in the literature and adopted by both academics and practitioners, then get exported to non-western contexts and applied as ‘best practice’. So, while Haslam and co now shift the argument (or contribute to the shift of the argument) towards what they call a process-based analysis of need structure and need salience in the western context, a question that arises, is: in the African Context, is this shift applicable? The point of context leading to theoretical shifts is demonstrated by Konrad (2000:619-624), who carried out a longitudinal study of work motivation in Slovenia from 1979 to 1994 using VIE theory as the investigative model. The author shows how greater openness in socio-political realities led to employee dissatisfactions with hitherto acceptable job securities and greater appeal for better pay. The VIE model is seen as a process mode to employee motivation, requiring that individuals make rational connections between their valued outcomes, perceived instrumentalities between their behaviour and those valued outcomes and beliefs about the veracity or probability (within the organisational context) of receiving due or promised rewards for particular behaviours. Konrad’s study is useful in that it is longitudinal and tracks contextual changes over time. These contextual changes are related to the macroeconomic and socio-political transitions that Eastern Europe went through as a result of Gorbachev’s ‘*perestroika*’ and ‘*glasnost*’. A major drawback of the work, however, is that the research instruments seem to measure only the valence and instrumentality aspects of VIE, avoiding the expectancy beliefs or aggregating expectancy with instrumentality.

Roe, Zinovieva, Dienes and Ten Horn (2000:659-663) also buttress the contextual argument about work motivation by carrying out a 3-country comparison of a model, which suggests job involvement and

organisational commitment as determined by job characteristics, opportunities to satisfy needs and extrinsic work factors. They hold that the issue of the similarity or otherwise of work motivations across countries and in different societies is:

*theoretically relevant because it touches upon the universality of organisational behaviour. It is of practical importance since organisational interventions from the West would give wrong results when based on assumptions that do not hold... (Roe, Zinovieva, Dienes & Ten Horn, 2000:659).*

Their findings indicate that it is important in formulating motivation theory and applications, for context and environmental specificities to take centre stage:

*...the environment that people are in produces differences in what motivates them; while the consequences of motivation tend to be universal...it means that local differences should be taken into account in theory development...and that managerial interventions from the West should not be assumed to be universally valid... (Roe, Zinovieva, Dienes & Ten Horn, 2000:679).*

Earlier work by Ajila (1997:165) who tested Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory in a Nigerian setting, consolidates the point. The author found the arrangement of motive needs in order of pre-potency to be problematic. The intuitive appeal of Maslow's theory is demonstrated by the Yuroba proverb Ajila refers to: 'Ebi ki i wo inu ki oro miran wo' meaning: 'For the hungry stomach, no other pressing issues are tolerated'. Ajila found no apparent relationship and connections between the lower and higher order needs and productivity. The needs appear to stand-alone and not in relation to each other, although the sample attached greater importance to the lower order needs. The main methodological and conceptual challenge with Ajila's research is that it is a typical theory-testing piece and does not investigate other variables, which could aid in a broader understanding of motivated behaviour within the context of Nigeria.

Other studies of motivation have looked at the vexed issue of pay and perceptions of fairness (Dornstein, 1989:287; Highhouse, Brooks-Laber, Lin & Spitzmueller; 2003:70-80; Jones, Scarpello & Bergmann 1999:130 and Shaw & Gupta, 2001:300), concluding typically, that assessments of procedural justice, reference point comparisons and perceived financial need impact how salaries are perceived and how they impact work behaviour. These results seem to speak to some of the work motivation challenges confronting the Ghanaian Public Sector Health workers who have in recent times (2005/2006) resorted to industrial action (declared illegal by many) in pursuit of pay improvements described more in terms of salary structure unfairness than monetary quantum per se.

On the differential impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, Wiersma (1992:101) carried out meta-analysis of work in the area and concluded that extrinsic and intrinsic motivation strategies are additive and more facilitatory of employee work effort than either of the two on their own – buttressing the notion of an integration of concepts to better account for motivation. Houkes, Janssen, de Jonge and Bakker (2003:427-428), suggest that task characteristics impact intrinsic motivation. Bassett-Jones and Lloyd (2005:935-941) studied Herzberg's 2-Factor Theory of Motivation to determine if it still has relevance 50 years after its formulation. They found evidence that suggests that Herzberg's concepts are still relevant: that it is intrinsic factors rather than hygiene factors which account for motivation. The issue with this study, however, is that it isolated and looked at an aspect of work experience – contributing ideas to corporate existence and improvement – which may not necessarily provide a mandatory challenge to employees' everyday work.

Finally, Lee-Ross (2005:253-254;264), in a cross-cultural study between Mauritius and Australia, concluded that, while Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model has an underlying framework that is applicable, there are cultural moderators which may affect the usefulness of the model to predict motivation. A difficulty with this study though, is that much as it adopts a cross-cultural perspective, it does not empirically investigate cultural norms, mores and their work related manifestations, choosing instead to infer cultural derivatives from the response patterns. A conclusion drawn, for example, is that: Mauritian employees (hotel workers were the sample) may find job autonomy a foreign concept because

they consistently rated Core Job Dimensions (CJDs) lower than their Australian counterparts. This is an intellectual leap that is difficult to accept – especially since much of the practical advice emerging from the paper appears directed at Australian managers working overseas. The point of this is that again, an ‘alien’ construct – job autonomy – is tested in an ‘alien’ environment. Because the sample has difficulties with it, a conclusion is drawn that job autonomy may be foreign to Mauritian workers. This drives home the context argument, reinforcing the need for indigenous psychologies. This paper now looks at the African context, highlighting its variety.

### **The African Context: What really is it?**

Africa is not an undifferentiated mass. Regionally and demographically, it is made up of: the Northern countries which are Arabic; Eastern countries which are a mix of Sudanic African and Black African; Southern countries which have Black African, Caucasian, Indian people; and West/Central Africa which has mainly Black African people. Geographically, it has mediterranean, desert, sahelian, savannah and forest areas. Socio-economically, it has the relatively ‘advanced’ South Africa and a few Northern countries with stronger economies as well as poor and, in some cases, almost destitute nations. In terms of political statehood, it has the trail blazing Ghana and the nascent South Africa. These variations are also mirrored in national differences in the capacity, operation and dominance of businesses and institutions. Within this varying reality, are the problems of political instability, economic potential still unharnessed, traditional cultures, which as a result of colonisation and globalisation, now have to contend with a pace of development that is not allowing a ‘natural’ growth (Puplampu, 2006). There are four pictures of the African Context: firstly that of a people who are in a perpetual state of struggle with themselves and their existence; secondly, a people with rich cultures that often engage in a metaphysical struggle with modernity; thirdly, a mosaic of countries, some with significant strides made across various areas of national endeavour such as business, politics and social provisions; fourthly, stark contrasts between wealth and poverty, sometimes juxtaposed on each other (Bird, 2004:34-60 and Puplampu 2004:72). A few studies in Africa are used to demonstrate this variety and the issue of cultural nuance which psychological theory has to take into account.

Noorderhaven, Vunderink and Lincoln (1996:133-146), writing on management in Africa, suggest that there is a need for more work to be done to bring African Values to bear on managerial practice, by explicating relevant aspects of culture. They write:

*It is very likely that the African tradition contains an original set of values and an autonomous logic that has escaped the Western experts...what is needed is a questionnaire which is able to capture these.’ (Noorderhaven, Vunderink and Lincoln, 1996:146).*

The Afrocentric Alliance (2001:59) argues that there is the need for specific cultural contingencies to be used to understand African organisational realities. They draw on other researchers and indicate that many organisations in many countries in Africa have traditional Western style managerial structures, which ignore indigenous perspectives such as the salience of the group. They refer to a Chichewa saying that: ‘One head does not carry the roof’.

Based on such a maxim, their research draws on strong group based norms, which influence work group behaviour by prescribing rules of engagement at work which derive from the larger society and which appear inseparable from the individual’s experience of work. This logic is perhaps also expressed in ‘ubuntu’.

The concept of ‘ubuntu’, a Zulu nuance that is gaining ground as an expression of managerial thought, is, according to Karsten and Illa (2005:607-615), a deep expression of community which may not find direct articulation in western thought. Following Nussbaum (2003:2-15), the contention in ‘ubuntu’ is that community interconnectedness – a key dimension of traditional African culture which provides for the extended family; and creates the belief and practice, for example, that any child in the village is the child of all the mothers in that village, etc. – should and could be used as a transforming tool in the new South Africa’s corporate environment. This interconnect is something of what Puplampu (2006) argues is

missing in some expressions of the Ghanaian work ethic. He suggests that there is rather a certain 'Occupational Schizophrenia' which is a disconnect between one's personal wealth and the progress or socio-economic growth of one's nation, society or community. It seems highly desirable, therefore, that the variety that is Africa should inform research on the work experience on the continent, to the extent that perhaps a reduction (not a cessation) in the endless testing of theory would be welcome, giving way to a more grounded development of indigenous theories.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

The paucity of theorising and empirical investigation on organisational behaviours in Africa creates a pressing need to examine issues such as employee motivation, profile its nature and provide some empirical basis for strategising and designing motivation schemes for employees. In Ghana, the motivated performance of employees is a general problem area where staff attitudes to and general work ethics are considered to be rather poor (Kuada, 1994:30-41). In a bid to address this, salaries and benefits across various Ghanaian private sector organisations have risen considerably so as to attract, retain and motivate high calibre staff to perform to acceptable standards. Is this approach working? Are employees *motivated*? Are they internally driven and or externally mandated to maintain high performance levels? The Ghanaian economy is rapidly becoming more service-oriented, thus reducing the traditional motivations associated with agricultural economies. Further to this, it is suggested that, at the present time (2006), the Ghanaian public sector employs some 500,000 (Ghanaian Deputy Minister of Finance, in response to media queries, June 2006) people, many of whom find their salaries inadequate and embark on strike action as one of the main means of achieving redress.

Employee motivation, however, does not occur in a vacuum. It is contextualised by organisational, institutional and socio-political constraints and offerings. This research therefore takes an eclectic approach and draws on views from Procedural Justice, Equity, Organisational Citizenship Behaviour, Needs and Drives, as well as various practicalities and institutional contexts of employee work experience such as Managerial Assumptions and Behaviours, Institutional Experiences and the Ghanaian business context, in an exploratory bid. The value of such an eclectic and integrated approach to motivation is demonstrated by Agboola (1997:99-111). In a study of strategies for motivating part-time teachers, he found what he called primary and secondary motive factors which relate to pay, pay administration, pay parity, commendations for good work done as well as availability of working tools. Here is a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic 'needs' as well as what may be termed rational assessments contextualising motivation.

## Research Objectives

This paper takes the view that there is insufficient empirical investigation of the range of multifaceted issues that may make up the employee motivation in the African/Ghanaian situation. In this regard, it may be argued that there is no model or indigenous psychology of motivation that speaks to the presenting challenges and opportunities of the experience of work in Africa. Given this, this research has two objectives:

- To characterise employee motivation and secure a factor structure which captures a multiplicity of interplaying variables.
- To attempt a measure of the Level of Employee Motivation (LoM) using a simple 3-item instrument. This is based on the definition of motivation as involving behaviours on the initiation, qualitative direction and maintenance of work effort. The study hypothesises that the 3 items of the LoM measure will cluster together in factor analysis.

## METHOD

*Design:* The study was designed as exploratory, comparative and cross-sectional, utilising the survey approach. *Organisational Sample:* 19 organisations were sampled as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sample of organisations**

Type of Organisation	N
Banking Institutions	8
Non-bank Financial Institutions	6
Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO)	3
Manufacturing	2

The organisations were all matched in terms of tenure on the Ghanaian corporate scene (5years or more), number of employees (50 or more) and were all based in Accra (the Capital of Ghana).

This organisational sample was arrived at based on the emerging trends in the Ghanaian corporate landscape where anecdotal evidence points to a growing number of financial services firms which tend to attract more and more employees – almost disproportionately to other organisations in the formal sector.

*Employee Sample:* N=260; drawn from across the gender, status and job grade hierarchy of each organisation.

*Data Instruments:* A 41-item questionnaire was developed and piloted. The pilot phase confirmed that the items were comprehensible and relevant. The 41 items were derived from and explored responses to issues on: Level of Motivation (LoM); Characteristics of Employee Motivation (CEM); aspects of Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB); Managerial Assumptions about employee behaviour (MA); Contextual Institutional Analysis (IAN) and Organisational Leadership Issues (Le).The instrument combined fixed response format on a 3-point scale with open-ended statements.

*Procedure:* Organisations were recruited into the study via 24 invitation letters. 19 responded with agreement to participate; all, however, required that data gathering be channelled through their Human Resource Managers. The questionnaires were then hand-delivered or couriered to the Human Resource or Administration Managers who were asked to distribute to an even cross-section of employees from top management to operatives. A Research Assistant then followed up and retrieved completed questionnaires at later agreed times. Interviews were also conducted with Human Resource / Administration Managers. These were unstructured. The entire data effort covered a period of 6 weeks. It must be noted that routing questionnaires through the HR managers obviously raises the issue of potential bias or 'fear' of influence on employee responses since respondents may feel pressured to present a more positive face to things than in reality. The present research, however, had no way of countering this confounding possibility since all the organisations agreed to participate only if this procedure is adopted. A measure of confidentiality was built in by asking that respondents return questionnaires in sealed envelopes to the collection point.

### Analyses Approach

The data was analysed using:

- a) Exploratory Factor Analysis to establish a factor structure of the characteristics of motivation;
- b) ONEWAY ANOVA to determine differences between organisational sectors on the level of motivation;
- c) Thematic analysis to isolate issues emerging from interviews with senior corporate officials.

### FINDINGS

The findings are presented regarding the objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics on the mean responses on the questionnaire items are presented, followed by results of exploratory factor analysis and summary of interviews carried out with 16 HR Admin/Managers/Directors.

Table 2: Employee sample

Organisations	N	Percent of total
Banks	129	49.6
Manufacturing Organisations	76	29.3
Non Bank Financial Institutions	44	16.9
Non Governmental Organisations	11	4.2

The Table below presents the undifferentiated means of respondents across all the variables investigated based on a 3-point response format: Very True (3); Somewhat True (2); Not True (1).

Table 3: Means across all variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Variable	Mean	SD	Sample Items
<b>Level of Motivation</b>			<b>Organisational Citizenship Behs</b>			<p><i>The 3 LoM Items are:</i> LoM1 – I am keen to come to work everyday; LoM2 – I put a lot of effort into my work to achieve good results for my company; LoM3 – I intend to continue at my job for the next 1-2 years and to put in the same of a higher level of work effort.</p> <p><i>3 of the CEM items are:</i> CEM6 – I am encouraged to put in my best because of the good salary and benefits offered by this company; CEM13a – I feel that I am worse-off than others like me who work for other companies. CEM15 – I am happy with the management style and general atmosphere in my company</p> <p><i>3 of the OCB items are:</i> OCB1a – Employees of this company are willing to give their time to help colleagues who have work related problems; OCB2a – Employees of this company do not mind filling in for sick colleagues (without demanding extra pay). OCB10a – Most employees of this company try to meet all the formal performance requirements of their job.</p> <p><i>2 of the Leadership items are:</i></p>
LoM1	2.87	.37	OCB1a	2.48	.58	
LoM2	2.95	.22	OCB2a	2.52	.75	
LoM3	2.74	.53	OCB3a	2.54	.64	
<b>Characteristics of Motivation</b>			OCB4a	2.27	.69	
CEM6	1.90	.70	OCB5a	1.51	.67	
CEM7	2.23	.76	OCB6a	1.32	.59	
CEM8	1.99	.72	OCB7a	2.23	.77	
CEM9	1.88	.71	OCB8a	2.48	.60	
CEM10	2.36	.75	OCB9a	2.69	.58	
CEM11	1.91	.73	OCB10a	2.71	.50	
CEM12	1.88	.79	OCB1b	2.34	.63	
CEM13	1.76	.70	OCB2b	2.45	.73	
CEM13A	1.66	.71	OCB3b	2.43	.68	
CEM14	2.78	.51	OCB4b	2.05	.69	
CEM15	2.03	.72	OCB5b	1.46	.60	
CEM18	1.53	.50	OCB6b	1.46	.66	
<b>Institutional Analysis</b>			OCB7b	2.41	.66	
IAN25	1.59	.73	OCB10b	2.68	.50	
IAN26	1.74	.78	<b>Managerial Assumptions</b>			
IAN27	2.41	.61	MA29	2.62	.52	
IAN28	1.68	.71	MA30	1.46	.63	
<b>Corporate Leadership</b>			<p>The LoM items are of particular interest for this study given the attempt to derive a simple measure of the level of employee motivation drawn from the theoretical notion that motivation is composed of</p>			
LE32	1.64	.73				
LE32B	1.64	.62				
LE33	2.35	.63				
LE34	1.92	.67				
LE35	2.22	.59				

LE36	2.17	.72	initiation, continuance and directional behaviour.	<p>LE32 – In this company to disagree with a superior is suicidal;</p> <p>LE36 – In this company managers provide regular constructive feedback.</p> <p><i>1 of the IAN items is:</i></p> <p>IAN25 – In this company you can only progress if you know someone at the top.</p> <p><i>The MA items are:</i></p> <p>MA29 – Workers of this company are generally hardworking;</p> <p>MA30 – Workers of this company always need to given direction and must be closely monitored and controlled.</p>
LE37	2.15	.74		

Table 3 shows that the LoM items had response means ranging from 2.74-2.95 (SD range of .22-.53), suggesting that respondents are highly motivated. To establish the factor structure of employee motivation, an exploratory factor analysis was carried out – results are detailed below.

**Table 4: Factor structure of employee motivation in Ghana**

Factor	Item Loadings	Means Of variables	% of variance	Description of factors or factor labels
1	CEM13 (.77) CEM6 (.72) CEM9 (.69) LE36 (.65) CEM12 (.65) CEM15 (.64) LE37 (.62) CEM10 (.57) CEM11 (.52) LE34 (.52) OCB7b (.47) OCB6b (-.45)	1.76 1.90 1.88 2.17 1.88 2.03 2.15 2.36 1.91 1.92 2.41 1.46	21.4	Behaviour Initiators
2	OCB5a (.83) OCB5b (.78) OCB8a (.74) MA29 (.71) MA30 (.67) OCB8b (.45)	1.51 1.46 2.48 2.62 1.46 2.41	10.4	Beliefs about Employees
3	OCB4b (.82) OCB3a (.82) OCB3b (.80) OCB1b (.62) OCB4a (.61) LE33 (.50)	2.05 2.54 2.43 2.34 2.27 2.35	9.1	Human Relations



4	OCB10b (.79) OCB10a (.74) OCB9b (.72) OCB9a (.65)	2.68 2.71 2.73 2.69	7.1	Qualitative Direction of Employee Performance
5	CEM14 (.78) CEM13a (.72) CEM8 (.69) CEM7 (.58) LE32 (.51) IAN28 (-.50)	2.78 1.66 1.99 2.23 1.64 1.68	5.9	Political Assessments
6	LOM1 (.83) LOM2 (.80) LOM3 (.51)	2.87 2.95 2.74	5.8	Level of Motivation

Principal components analysis with Varimax Rotation, converged in 26 iterations, yielding 6 factors, which account for 60% of the variance. Item loadings below .45 were suppressed. Interpretation of factors was based on the conceptual issues, which informed the items used in the questionnaire. As hypothesised, the 3 LoM items clustered together, thus allowing for further investigations using the LoM measure. The possibility of differences between employees from different organisational sectors on the level of motivation was tested using Oneway ANOVA. The results are shown below in Table 5.

**Table 5: Oneway ANOVA on level of motivation**

Composite score LoM	Organisational Sector				F Probability
	Banks	NBFI	Manufacturing	NGO	
	8.4	8.4	8.5	8.3	.9406

The LoM measure requires a composite score of all 3 items (LOM1, 2 & 3). Results above show that there are no differences between the organisational samples on the level of motivation. This confirms the range of means reported in Table 3.

**Interview Results and Summary of Data from Open-Ended Questions**

16 HR Managers, Directors and Heads of Administration were interviewed. The results are summarised thematically below.

***On whether staff of the various organisations are motivated***

87.5% of the senior officials interviewed felt that employees of their organisations were highly motivated. They came to this conclusion based on perceived characteristics of the motivated worker which include: employee cheerfulness, willingness to work hard and execute assignments given, go the extra mile and put in their best. This is consistent with the findings from the LoM measure where employee self-reports suggested that, across all the organisations sampled, staff were highly motivated.

***On factors which motivate and initiate motivated behaviour***

The factors mentioned which contribute to employee motivation include the following: competitive salaries and compensation (40%); humane working environment, eg. frequent interaction between managers and staff; recognition; participation in problem solving; delegation, etc. (31%); and training and career development and possibilities for internal upward mobility (18.7%).

## DISCUSSIONS

The results are now discussed in relation to the objectives, which were to:

- Secure a factor structure, which captures a multiplicity of interplaying variables.
- Attempt a measure of the Level of Employee Motivation (LoM) using a simple 3-item instrument. This was found to be the case.

### Factor Structure

Factor analysis yielded a 6-factor structure (refer to Table 4). The variables loading onto Factor 1 include the following: attraction to work for a particular company, satisfaction with internal organisational dynamics and procedures, goal setting, and satisfaction with leadership approaches. The factor is thus interpreted as relating to 'Behaviour Initiation'. Significantly, a variable that would be antithetical to initiation of motivated behaviour, 'fault-finding', loads negatively on this factor.

Variables loading on Factor 2, suggest the description: 'Beliefs about Employees'. The items loading on this factor (given the mean values) suggests a high degree of internal consistency in the response patterns of the sample. Items OCB5a, b and MA30, all refer to negative perceptions and beliefs about workers. These recorded mean values suggest 'Somewhat True' responses. The other items represent positive perceptions about employees and all record mean values closer to 'Very True'. This is in consonance with the interview data, which suggests that managers feel their employees are well motivated, and also in consonance with the results from the measures of Level of Motivation.

Variables loading onto Factor 3 refer to Human Relations issues in the work place: team-work, concern for the fellow worker, consultation and managerial firmness. Recent work by May, Gilson and Harter (2004:13), lends support to the importance of fostering consultation, involvement, etc. on meaningfulness at work. The means of the items here are all above 2, suggesting a moderate sense of the presence of these attributes in the organisations sampled.

Factor 4 has variables that point to employee willingness to perform to acceptable standards and perhaps even more. The factor is described as the 'Qualitative Direction of Employee Performance'. It is interesting that the means of the items are all above 2.5 indicating a strong sense of these attributes in the organisations sampled. This is present in organisations where there is a view that there is consultation and appropriate human relations (Factor 3, and related means). This is in consonance with much of the research on Organisational Citizenship Behaviour, which suggests that employee willingness to engage in extra role behaviours is related to the organisational context (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2004:281 and Lievens & Anseel 2004:300). Factor 5 is interpreted as 'Political Assessments', with 5 items loading positively (awareness of corporate profits, comparative assessments, pay equity/relativities) and 1 negative loading (perceived culturally negative norm of reciprocity known in Ghana as '*hand-go-hand-come*'). This negatively loading item is one, which connotes the 'wheeling and dealing' nature of some Ghanaian organisational politics and business. That it loads negatively may suggest that it is recognised as a part of organisational life, but frowned upon (mean 1.68).

### The Character or Nature of Employee Motivation

Steers and Porter (1996:5-6) and many other leaders in the field of motivation research agree that motivation can only be inferred from behaviour, is goal directed, has both internal and external causative possibilities and has to do with behaviour initiation, maintenance and qualitative direction. These are higher-level conceptual notifications, which serve as an umbrella for any statement of theory. Do these umbrella notifications hold in the Ghanaian case?

The emergent factor structure, as with any exploratory work, is constrained by the nature of items used in eliciting responses. In this case, it was suggested that a combination of intrinsic, extrinsic, need-based, rational assessments as well as context-laden variables would interplay to denote the nature of employee

motivation. In other words, no one theoretical frame would, of itself, account for motivations with the setting of this study. This seems to receive exploratory support. The 6 factors speak to needs and drives as well as rational comparative assessments. In addition to this, beliefs about employees and managerial styles and organisational context also contribute to accounting for the variance in the data. Referring to Roe, Zinovieva, Dienes and Ten Horn (2000:659) and Ajila (1997:162), it is obvious that employee motivations are predicated on a variety of influencing variables, which are embedded in the national situation, organisational context, particular job/s as well as individual realities – this supports something of Agboola's (1997:110) findings. This research is exploratory; it would therefore be premature to suggest that established theories have been found to be irrelevant. Rather, that further research needs to set established theory at a tangent, focusing more on establishing whether employees are motivated, what constitutes motivation and the variables which influence motivation.

In this regard, it is confirmatory to note that the interview and open-ended data support the factors that emerge by referring to attributes such as willingness to work hard, go the extra mile and execute assignments given. These are reflected in Factors 1 & 4. The interview data also suggest that the variables that influence motivation include: competitive salaries and compensation, humane working environment, frequent interaction between managers and staff, recognition, participation in problem solving, etc. (reflected in Factors 2, 3 and 5).

### **Measuring the Level of Motivation**

The final Factor extracted, is one that is of immense interest for this research. It accounts for only 5.8% of the variance, but has all three items (keenness to come to work – behaviour initiation; willingness to put in effort – qualitative direction of behaviour and intention to remain – behaviour maintenance) indicative of the notion of a 'Level of Motivation' loading on it, and neatly too. This does offer some modest grounds for optimism that this simple 3-item measure of the Level of Motivation may well hold some promise for further investigation. Significantly, there were no organisational differences on the composite scores on the LoM measure.

### **Practical Implications**

What are the implications of these findings for Ghanaian organisations and managerial practise? A brief statement on some of the issues on the Ghanaian organisational landscape may set the scene. The sectors sampled were: banking, NGO, non-bank financial and manufacturing. The banking sector in Ghana is vibrant. There are 21 mainstream and merchant banks (such as Ghana Commercial; Standard; Standard Chartered; Ecobank; Barclays) with a total branch network of over 338 branches as well as 130 Rural and Community Banks – for a population of 20 million (Bank of Ghana data reflected in Ecobank Ghana Prospectus, 2006). There has recently been an aggressive influx of sub-regional banks mainly from Nigeria, which see the Ghanaian economy as stable and promising. This has led to significant staff mobility, headhunting and huge compensation offers. The NGO sector is equally vibrant. There are no firm statistics on the number of NGOs, however, they are known to attract capable staff and engage in much donor-funded projects. The manufacturing sector operates in an environment of stiff competition. It faces many challenges including high cost of raw materials, imported machinery and the dumping of cheap imports from China and the Far East. The non-bank financial sector is also quite vibrant. They provide services in areas such as brokerage, microfinance, employee credit schemes and so on. The competition for employees or human resources across all four sectors is quite keen. Pupilampu (2005:250-257) set out a continuum of organisational health and ill-health in the context of a developing economy, noting that the lack of appropriate people management systems contribute to employee alienation. In this regard, one of the pictures of the African context referred to earlier (traditional cultures that often engage in a struggle with modernity) presents something of a dynamic challenge to people management and organisational systems. In the Ghanaian setting, a broad range of motivations may be at play, some deriving from national culture norms such as catering for the extended family or taking great pride from status in the community. These may drive a certain motive dynamic, which may not be explicable from the perspective of either one's personal needs or one's engagement with rationality. Indeed, it may be surmised that, while a cultural ethic of respect and status drives a certain motivation,

another norm – maintaining the extended family – may drive another motivation dynamic. It seems relevant to surmise that organisations therefore need to recognise the multiplicity of variables that influence motivation. The dominant ethic of using pay does not appear to work – as indicated by the anecdotal evidence on significant staff movements in the Banking sector in Ghana. What would motivate employees? The answer seems to lie in a mix of compensation strategies, conducive human relations environments and opportunities for personal growth. The manufacturing sector, in particular, abounds with anecdotal evidence that many managers appear to think that all employees are interested in is 'money'. Managers therefore downplay human relations, respect for employees and considerations for personal progress and development. The findings here do suggest that employees value recognition, participation, etc. just as well as compensation. The managers interviewed mention these factors as important.

Another relevant implication is that, if it is possible to measure motivation, then managers can move away from subjective assumptions about employee motivation since periodic surveys of the level of employee motivation may yield empirical data that could be used to design HRM strategies as well as work on managerial behaviour.

### ORIGINALITY/VALUE

The value and originality of this study is two-fold. Firstly, the study attempts to set out a factor structure of the nature of employee motivation in Ghana. The results support earlier work by other researchers, which suggests that, in the African context, the needs/drive and process/rationality divide in motivation theory, may be an artificial one. Secondly, the study puts forward the possibility of measuring the level of employee motivation using a simple 3-item instrument. The results provide a moderate measure of confidence that the 3-item instrument has empirical possibilities in that they cluster together in the factor analysis, show through the One-way ANOVA with support from interview data that there are no organisational differences in level of motivation (for the sample in this study).

### CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Three conclusions can be drawn: motivation research in Africa needs to move away from testing established theory to generating context relevant models. The Factor structure, which has emerged would need to be tested in two ways. New questionnaire items need to be generated based on each factor and data gathered to check whether or not the factor structure will hold in over 2 or 3 iterations with different organisations and samples. Additionally, further grounded qualitative data needs to be collected to triangulate the structure. The second conclusion could also be set within the context of further research: that the level of motivation could be determined using a simple measure. Again, further qualitative data would need to be collected to access and assess the underlying dynamics for responses to each of the items in the LoM measure. Thirdly, organisational and managerial practise needs to proceed on the empirical basis that employee motivation in Ghana is multivariate in nature with a combination of influencing factors – not limited to the pecuniary only.

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