

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This final chapter presents the general study and discusses the majors' findings. The purpose of this study was to explore the motivation of the call center operators (CCOs) in Antananarivo, Madagascar. The employee motivation is vital to the success of organizations. A lack of employee motivation may lead to the organizational problems in turnover and retention, morale and poor productivity. The call center company are not unfamiliar with these human resources issues, however, many call center adopt many strategies to motivate their employees. To better understand the motivation of the call center operators (CCOs), this research focused on the perception of the employees toward their work. Data were collected using open-ended questions by interviewing sixteen (16) operators. Therefore, this chapter discusses the findings of the study in chapter four (04), concludes and gives recommendations as deemed fit on the motivation at call center in Antananarivo, Madagascar.

5.2. Summary of finding

Largely due to the technological development in the field of telecommunications, as well as the integration of telecommunications and information technology, the call center industry has shown remarkable growth worldwide (Burgess & Connell, 2004). Especially since the 1990s, call centers have become the latest and clearest expression of efforts aimed at rationalizing the provision of service through the use of communication and information technologies (Russel, 2004). This is commonly regarded as a direct result of organizations' attempts to provide customer service at a significantly lower cost (Paulet, 2004) in response to information and communication technology developments, business outsourcing practices, and internal reorganization of enterprises (Burgess & Connell, 2004). Therefore, the purpose

of this qualitative study was to explore motivational factors within a call center in an effort to understand what motivates or discourages the employee in the call center. The data came from volunteers working within a currently active call center. Sixteen (16) call center operators were asked some open-ended questions. The questions were asked through the video call and the dialog was recorded and transcribed. This transcribed was coding to establish themes. Some themes were finding out which are about the motivational and discouragement factors in the call center. The results of this study contribute to the understanding of motivation, and strategies that may enhance the motivation in the call center.

Chapter one (01) began with a description of the background of the problem, defining the terms including the description of the “Call Center” job in Madagascar and the assumptions and the limitations of the study. The chapter two (02) contributed the basis and theory for this study relating to the employee motivation. And, it described the characteristics of the call center’s work in detail. Then, the chapter three (03) included the research design of this current study; the methodology, data collection, instrumentation, and analysis. The review of methodologies selected to facilitate the research process for the qualitative method. For that, the study uses the semi-structured questionnaires to get more deeply the information about the employee motivation toward their work in the “call center”. Chapter four (04) contained the findings from the current qualitative study of employee motivation for the call center. The study findings led to the identification of some themes. Hence, the chapter (05) will address the interpretation of the data results and recommendations for call center motivation.

Therefore, during this research, the researcher finds out some factors which motivated and discourage the employee in the call center. Several themes were found in the results that addressed to the research question in the study. The themes that emerged from results are as follows:

1. Employee compensation and benefits

2. Leadership traits
3. Friendly coworkers
4. Job content
5. Skills requirement
6. Working conditions
7. Job security
8. Promotion

5.3. Discussion of finding

The results of the questionnaire data analysis were described in the previous chapter, Chapter four (04). This segment of the final chapter will address the significant findings of the research according to the research question. That research question was to explore the perception of the call center operators (CCOs) about the motivation in their work. Not surprisingly, when asked to describe their work, these participants described their work in overwhelmingly negative terms: stressful, hectic, chaotic, and bad relationships between the workers and the supervisors/managers. Therefore, towards the result of this study, the findings show that there are some motivational and discouragement factors of the employees in the call center.

Motivational factors

According to Rahman & Hoque (2014) there are five job dimensions that are very important for an employee in order to feel motivated and satisfied in their workplace. These are the work itself, pay, promotion opportunities, supervision, and co-workers. In contrast, in this study, the participants in the interviews ranked five (05) factors which motivated them in the call center, these five (05) factors as follows: (01) Employee compensation and benefits, (02) Friendly coworkers, (03) Skills requirement, (04) Work conditions and (05) Job security.

First, the employee compensation and benefits was expressed by sixty-nine percent (69%) of the participants as factors of motivation in the call center company. Fifty-six percent (56%) of them expressed that the reasons why they choose to work in this domain is because of the compensation and benefits. And eighty-one percent (81%) of them expressed that the rewards with all the benefits such the allowances, bonuses and the extra pay makes them motivated in the call center. The employees are motivated directly by the system how the company reward them when they contribute to their organization's effectiveness. This form of reward system has proven to be highly motivating, based on the simple idea we humans strive to do perform better if we are able to acquire what we want (Bengtsson & Hedberg, 2012). Having a motivational compensation also may lead to the retention of the employee. According to Bau & Dowling (2007), the reward could get more people become interested in working at the company and, above all, it means that they have employees who want to stay in the company.

Secondly, having friendly coworkers was another factor which makes the employee in call center motivated. Eighty-eight percent 88% of the participants stated that their coworkers are friendly and that make fun and a good atmosphere in their work. Friendly coworkers are distinct from general types of friendship because it is focused on friendship occurred in the workplace (Song, 2005). Feelings of dissatisfaction may start to surface if the relationship with the coworkers is not good in the workplace. An employee feels emotionally or socially detached at work and cannot seem to fit into the organization's culture or blend with other colleagues in that case. At that time, the employees prefer to find a different job than try to approach the issue directly. Workplace relationships and interaction have an impact on employee motivation, satisfaction, and retention. Negative attitudes can lead to isolation and loneliness, which may instigate an employee's desire to resign. Thus, Dotan (2007) stated that when employees have trustful friends at work, they can get help or advice from their friend

co-workers and, therefore, gain feelings of security, comfort, and satisfaction with their job at work. Also, employees in friendship tend to engage in altruistic behaviors by providing co-workers with help, guide, advice, feedback, recommendation, or information on various work-related matters (Hamilton, 2007).

Thirdly, skills requirement in the call center was one factor which motivated the employees also. Because of the economic situation in Madagascar, many people cannot continue their study after the high school. Those kinds of people don't have any skills to apply a job. In contrast, because the call center job doesn't require any skills apart that ability to speak French. That job becomes interesting and makes them motivated. Seventy-five percent (75%) stated that the reason make them motivated is that skill requirement. Apart that the content of the work was described as a discouraging factor for the call center employees, sixty-nine percent (69%) of the participant also expressed that because of their work experiences they are getting new jobs knowledge and that motivate them. Even if the employees don't have the skills related to the job, through work, the employee gains additional knowledge. This is obtained from the experiences and training offered by the company. Training provides a foundation for personal development by helping employees develop certain skills, decreasing their fear of trying new tasks and allowing them to deal with stress, frustration, and conflict. These factors give them a chance to perform better, resulting in a sense of motivation and satisfaction with their work. According to Cole (2002), getting more knowledge lead to the high morale of the employees, it increased confidence and motivations. Then, it may lead to the lower turnover also, because it brings a sense of security at the workplace which in turn reduces employee turnover and absenteeism is avoided.

Fourthly, the work conditions were another factor of the motivation in the call center. In this study, the work conditions are more about the conditions of the physical work

environment of the call center company. Ninety-four percent (94%) of the participants underline that their workplace have safety and welfare regulations. The participants in this study explain that their workplace follow the standard. It is about the things provided for the health, safety, welfare and personal hygiene needs of employees. Including toilets, seating, place for eat, workspace, temperature and air quality, lighting and flooring. Having good conditions of the workplace may lead to the motivation of the employee to work. Providing a safety and welfare and personal hygiene needs is very important for them. Nowadays, the relationship between work, the workplace and the tools of work, workplace becomes an integral part of work itself.

Fifthly, the job security motivated the employee in call center also. The job security is perceived as an indispensable right of an employee which guarantees that the employee and their family will not be deprived of their income and maintains an honorable life. All the participants (or 100%) in this study argued that the job security is the factors of motivation in the call center. The employee in that kind of company should be not afraid to be lay off if they work well as they explain. Through that, they feel confident about their future in this work. Then, the job security provides social benefits and it also functions as an important motivational tool enhancing employees' positive feelings towards their jobs. Even if their position in the work never changes as they stated in the theme of promotion, the security to stay for a long time in the work is very ensuring. Employees who don't fear for their jobs are more likely to perform at a higher level and feel greater commitment to an employer. However, job security works best as a motivator when employees see a connection between job retention and their own performance. Thus, it has a significant effect on the overall performance of the team as well as the organization's performance. (James, 2012)

Discouragement factors

Today, burnout signifies feelings of physical and emotional exhaustion, alienation from others, and reduced personal accomplishment. In this study, even if the employee in the call center was establish some factors which make them motivated, they also expressed about the factors of demotivation. As mention above, when the researcher ask about the call center work, the participants answer that there is a lot of stress, pressure and some problem between them and the supervisors/managers. Thus, through the interviews, some themes was find out which describe the discouragement factors such as follows: (01) leadership traits, (02) job content and (03) the promotion.

First, the leadership traits were underline as a factor of demotivation for the call center work. Work motivation can be a reflection of personal attitudes and of attitudes towards group work and collaboration. It may also influenced by the factors of the leaders part, especially by the leader's wisdom (Rawung, 2012). On average, ninety-four percent (94%) of the participants expressed about the bad relationship between them and the supervisors/managers. Lack of miss understanding between the managers who are foreigners and operators was the first factors of demotivation. The facts of communication's problem create the discomfort to the call center operators (CCOs). Then, the relation between the operators and the supervisors is from the lack of leadership skills of the supervisors, knowing that the supervisors are the operators who get the promotion. Those poor leadership skills, lack of support social and interpersonal relationship between them create disagreement. These conflicts between employees and supervisors may give rise to disaccord for employees (Ruyter, et al., 2001). Then, having strict rules also was a factor which discourages them in the work. Eighty-seven percent (87%) of the participants explain that the rules, disciplines in the workplace are very strict. That was from the leadership of the manager, the human aspect was not taken into account during they establish of the rules as they explain. These kind strict

rules make the employee not comfortable in the workplace because their personal needs are limited and that can lead to the high turnover in the company.

Secondly, the job content was expressed as a factor of demotivation also during this research. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the participant explain that their work is difficult apart that it is a routine and boring. These aspects of work make them discourage to the work. Another aspect also is the unclear process. Beach (1980) stated that the motivation is related to the job content, and as that which occurs when people perform an activity from which they derive motivation and satisfaction from simply engaging in the activity itself. Then, according to Dyck (2001) quality of life of an employee can get affected because of job stress. Apart that aspect of the work, seventy-five percent (75%) of the participant also underline that the tools used during the work, stress and the pressure was factors of discouragement. That aspect of work leads to the health problem of employee as they explain. Getting physically, morally and psychological disease may lead to high turnover to company. Belt et al., (2000) stated that agents in all three sectors financial services, IT and third-party services spoke of the phenomenon of “burnout”, caused by the pressure of working exclusively ‘on the phones’.

Thirdly, the lack of promotion at work was the last factor which discourages the employee in the call center. They explain that it is impossible to get promotion in their work and they don't view this job as a future job because of that. The promotion is a change of assignment to a job at a higher level in an organization. The new job normally provides an increase in pay, status and demands more skills and responsibility. For the call center work, seventy-five percent (75%) of the participants expressed that it is impossible to get a promotion in this job. May their compensation will increase but never their position level in the organization. The promotion is one of recognition in the work which the companies offer to employee to enhance the motivation. Lack of that recognition may lead to the turnover

intention. Furthermore, Baah and Amoako (2011) stated that the opportunities for personal growth and advancement help employees to find their worth with respect to value given to them by organization. It can increase motivational level of employees which will ultimately raise internal happiness of employees and that the internal happiness will cause motivation and satisfaction.

5.4. Limitations

The limitations of this study include lack of breadth across various types and sizes of the call center industry and an inability to conduct on-site field research that could have unearthed broader and deeper employment issues.

Then, another limitation is that the research design was such that the data was collected via a self-reporting for each theme. Only the call center operators took part in the study. It may be to the advantage of future studies to include managers in the study in order to play a controlling effect regarding their experiences of the employees.

The results of the research study included data gathered from only those respondents who voluntarily agreed to participate. Participation by call center representatives in the study was strictly voluntary. Lack of response potentially increases sample bias by excluding data from individuals not participating. The participants represented those most interested in the study and not necessarily of the underlying population.

In addition, motivation is a very complex concept since definitions cannot be refined to certain variables listed by the researcher. Any attempt to define these variables would not be not easy as each individual has their own perception of what motivation means to them. Therefore, determining what exactly motivates employees can be considered to be somewhat subjective.

5.5. Managerial implications

Many companies face motivation issues now, and consistently maintaining high levels motivation in the workplace can be challenging. As this research has helped to show, there are multiple benefits to having a motivated employee, and a call center is no different. Having an active and motivated employee will help to reduce turnover and the costs related to it. It will help an organization to build on brand promises. For these reasons, it is important to identify the stress and pressure that is unique to call center customer service operations and work to reduce it.

Rose and Wright (2005) found that the call center employees who generally regard themselves as playing a positive role within the wider organization are regularly informed and valued by team leaders. They note that employee motivation, commitment, and loyalty depend on good leadership, communication, recognition, and training. Looking from the theme described in chapter four (04), the leadership traits were a demotivation factors which happen in the call center. Some tips are provided to give call center leaders/managers ideas to help with the employees in carrying out their works (see Appendix C). The manager should delegate tasks that have to be performed; scheduling is time-consuming for managers, so pass that task to the workers. Set up the guidelines to follow and let the employees go. Helping the employee grow can help the managers too. About the supervisors, they should have a training related with their work including the leadership. The way they treats workers about sharing information is a coveted value for call center operators. When operators are frustrated with calls, it is often the lack of information to successfully complete a call. When operators know they can approach leadership with questions and receive answers or information, they will perform better. If managers claim to have a policy and do not follow, they lose the credibility to lead. Several participants said that they knew that if they got a difficult call, they could go

to managers/supervisors and talk about the call. It was important for participants in this study to know that leadership has been credible.

Secondly, the data from chapter four (04) also found that the theme of job content is a discouragement factor for the employee in the call center. To solve the difficulty of the work in the call center, the organization can make the task more easier such for example removing the call handle time expectations, removing visual queues of the number of calls holding, reducing the amount of scripts required to be given, and empowering the employee to “own” their interactions with the customer. For this to be successfully done, the culture of the call center job needs to be examined and changed where applicable. For instance, while employees can be encouraged to focus on quality, if the handle time requirement is still a part of their yearly performance objectives there may be intrinsic pressure to still focus on the speed of the call. This would be because if they did not, their yearly performance ranking would be impacted. Then, many studies also demonstrate that stress and the nature of call center jobs leads to the high levels of staff attrition, sickness and/or health problems (Holman, Batt, & Holtgrewe, 2007). Because of the challenging nature of call center job, especially in terms of the routine work it can entail, job design is an increasingly important factor in tackling employee well-being within call center. Focus on job design can also help ameliorate some of the less attractive aspects of the call center role. To enhance the activity, it may not be possible to change certain features of call center jobs, but some “organizational” aspects could be modified. The question of job-choice appears to be important, as do certain factors of working relations with clients and superiors, and also the question of work-loads.

The final recommendation is to enhance the management promotion which was not a motivating factor for the call center employees. The data from Chapter four (04) found that in the call center there is a lack of promotion. The company may give a promotion by increasing the compensation but never give promotion by increasing the position level of the employee.

Keeping employees motivated is a task that managers can resolve in a number of ways. Promotions to positions that include more responsibility or authority are among the tools managers have to motivate employees. The possibility of a job promotion can motivate an employee by appealing to career anchors, which are the major career and personal priorities that workers may hold. Recognizing the opportunity for an improved on-the-job experience can be another way that employees get motivated by promotions. To do, an employee must produce consistent, high-quality work and receive recognition or acquire a reputation among peers. Additional job perks, such as larger offices, also help promotions motivate employees.

5.6. Recommendations for future research

There was very little research on the strategies that call center company can use to reduce the stress and employee turnover. There is a significant need for studies to be conducted in the call center especially in Madagascar on a larger scale, on strategies that organizations can use to reduce employee turnover. Conducting a study of this magnitude can provide organizations with the resources to reduce employee turnover. This type of study might improve the employee management relationship; improve turnover, performance, motivation, and the organizations profits.

The results of the research study suggested significant factors which motivates the employees of call center. A first recommendation is to repeat the research study using larger participants of call center. The research study used a convenience sample of one call center organization with a few call center locations. Although the participants met significance requirements, larger participants would verify the generalization to the larger population of call centers in Madagascar. A larger participants would further provide justification and consistency for enhance motivation appropriate for call centers in Madagascar. Then, repeat this research by conducting a quantitative analysis also may confirm the exact factors which make the call center operators motivated in their work.

Another further research is recommended to investigate the expectation of the employee which influence employee motivation and customer satisfaction. Specific interest is in respect of expectation of high performing call center operators who report lower levels of motivation. In other words, can an employee in the call center who displays high levels of motivation well-being be highly productive even if the expectation is low? This would be very useful to human capital management strategies in the call center, where work environment is not always satisfying. However, care should be taken not to isolate expectation from other aspects of work behavior. That analyze is can use the expectancy theory. Expectancy theory is more concerned with the cognitive antecedents that go into motivation and the way they relate to each other. That is, expectancy theory is a cognitive process theory of motivation that is based on the idea that people believe there are relationships between the effort they put forth at work, the performance they achieve from that effort, and the rewards they receive from their effort and performance. In other words, people will be motivated if they believe that strong effort will lead to good performance and good performance will lead to desired rewards.

5.7. Conclusion

It is important for a business to understand that the call center is the face of the organization for customers. As such, it is important to understand what kind of impact a call center operators (CCOs) can have on individual customers, as well as the success of the organization. It is necessary for an organization to recognize that a call center offers a unique atmosphere to employees. There are present stresses that other departments of the company do not have. For this reason, it is important to focus on identifying what makes a call center work environment positive, as well as a negative environment. Special attention should be given to focusing on the needs of employees and ensuring that their work experience is motivating. An employee motivated will be more productive and provide a higher level of

customer service to a caller. If a call center operators are discouraged it will result in higher turnover and increased expenses for the organization.

Finally, management should take time to focus on how on ensuring employee are adequately supported. This includes providing sufficient and extensive promotion, giving employees the freedom work without scripts or a specific call structure, erasing the contradicting performance measurements (call volume, length of calls), and placing importance on quality. An employee well supported will help reduce operating inefficiencies, costs, and contribute to the overall/long-term success of the department.

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APPENDIX A

LETTRE DE DEMANDE (french version)

Bonjour,

Mon nom est RABETOKOTANY Haintsoa, et je suis une étudiante de Master à Atma Jaya Yogyakarta, en Indonésie. Je mène une étude sur la motivation des employés dans les “call center” à Antananarivo, Madagascar. Le but de cette lettre est de demander votre participation à une étude de cas, où j'interviewerai les opérateurs des “call center”.

L'entrevue prendra environ 60 minutes. L'entrevue sera enregistrée, avec votre permission, pour faciliter la transcription. L'enregistrement vocal sera transcrit par moi. Seul moi entendrai les enregistrements. Il n'y aura pas d'enregistrements vidéo. Vous serez autorisé à consulter la transcription de votre entrevue pour corriger les erreurs ou supprimer toute information que vous souhaitez supprimer.

Les participants à ce projet de recherche ont été choisis de façon ciblée en fonction de leur expérience et de leur expérience. Votre participation à cette étude apportera une contribution unique à l'étude de cette question d'une importance cruciale au sein de votre entreprise. Votre participation à cette étude sera confidentielle. Votre nom n'apparaîtra pas sur le relevé de notes, le rapport publié ou tout autre article ou publication.

Si vous souhaitez participer, vous pouvez accepter ma demande d'ami, et on m'envoyant l'heure et une date convenables pour que je vous appelle pour organiser l'interview. Si vous avez d'autres questions ou que vous souhaitez discuter de la recherche avant de décider de participer, n'hésitez pas à m'envoyer un message avec ce compte Facebook.

Je suis dans l'attente de votre réponse.

LETTER REQUESTING PARTICIPATION (english version)

Hello,

My name is RABETOKOTANY Haintsoa, and I am a student of Master Degree at Atma Jaya Yogyakarta, Indonesia. I am conducting a research study about the employee motivation in the call center and especially in Antananarivo, Madagascar. The purpose of this letter is to request your participation in a case study, where I will be interviewing call centers operators who work in this domain.

The interview will take approximately 60 minutes. The interview will be recorded, with your permission, to aid in transcribing. The voice recording will be transcribed by me. Only me will hear the recordings. There will be no video recordings. You will be permitted to review the transcript of your interview to correct any errors or remove any information you wish to redact.

Participants for this research project have been purposefully selected based on their experience and background. Your participation in this study will make a unique contribution to the study of this critically important issue within your company. Your participation in this study will be held in confidence. Your name will not appear on the transcript, the published report, or any follow-up articles or publications.

If you are willing to participate, you can accept my friend request and along with a convenient time and date for me to call to set up the interview. If you have any additional questions or would like to discuss the research prior to deciding to participate, feel free to send me a message with this Facebook account.

I look forward to hearing from you.

APPENDIX B

Questionnaires

- 1- Could you tell me what was the employment reasons at this company?
*(Pourriez-vous me dire ce qui a été les raisons de l'emploi dans cette entreprise?
c'est-à-dire pourquoi vous avez choisi de travailler dans cette entreprise?)*
- 2- Why are you motivated in your job here?
(Pourquoi vous êtes motivé dans votre travail?)
- 3- How would you describe your job here?
Comment décririez-vous votre travail?
- 4- How do you describe the work atmosphere at your workplace?
Comment décrivez-vous l'ambiance de travail dans votre lieu de travail ?
- 5- What kind of rewards you expect or get from here?
Quel genre de récompense (salaire) vous attendiez ou vous recevez?
- 6- Could you describe the working condition at your workplace?
Pourriez-vous décrire les conditions de travail dans votre lieu de travail ?
- 7- How would you describe job security in your workplace?
*Comment décririez-vous la sécurité de l'emploi sur votre lieu de travail ?en termes
de contrat de travail ?*
- 8- Could you describe the future of your career here?
Pourriez-vous décrire l'avenir de votre carrière ici ?

APPENDIX C

Success Tips for Call Center Managers

Do	Don't
Treat workers like the asset they are.	Forget the value of each worker.
Look for a variety of duties to offer workers.	Lock the worker into one duty.
Be a transparent altruistic leader	Never lie to a worker even if the truth is uncomfortable.
Support a workers needs.	Never hold back information needed to succeed.
Be unselfish with praise.	Never take successes alone.
Pay the workers fairly.	Think you are saving the organization money by paying the workers poorly.
Define the workers skill sets.	Let the worker atrophy with lack of variety.
Expect a worker to grow and leave the department.	Lock workers into a position just because they are good at that position.
Give adequate vacation for the worker.	Skimp on the need for proper rest.
Challenge the worker.	Let passable be good enough.
Find project work.	Let the position become boring.
Know the position you are the leader of.	Keep best practices a secret.
Be approachable.	Close your door to questions.
Require an atmosphere of welcoming.	Allow open discontent.