

## Factors Promoting Self-Motivating Behaviours at Work Among Middle Level Management Staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Botswana

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**Abstract:** A descriptive type of research was conducted in July 2006 to determine the factors promoting self-motivating behaviours at work among the middle level management staff (Managers) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Botswana. The study included all the 30 middle level managerial staff of the Ministry of Agriculture. A structured questionnaire was used to collect information on the personal characteristics of the respondents. Also, the questionnaire consisted of statements anchored on a 5 point likert type rating scale. The statements were developed from literature and represented general self-motivating behaviours among staff members of any organization. The statements were validated and the reliability estimate calculated and found to be 0.93, indicating a good degree of reliability. Frame error and selection error were catered for; sampling error was not a threat since all the target population for the study 30 participated in the study. The data collected were analysed using frequencies and percentages to describe the personal characteristic of the respondents. means, standard deviations and ranks were used to describe the factors promoting self-motivating behaviours at work place among the respondents. Correlation coefficients were used to describe the relationship between some selected personal characteristics and of the managers towards factors promoting self-motivating behaviours at work. Results revealed that Male dominated the managerial cadre of the MoA staff. Also, the managers were mostly Diploma graduates, having between 11-25 years of experience and mostly within the age bracket of 31-40 years. Majority of the managers responded favourably in varying degrees to the factors promoting self-motivating behaviours at work. Also, most of the factors promoting self-motivating behaviours attracted a negligible relationship between the personal characteristics of the managers and the self-motivating behaviours examined in the study.

**Key words:** Self motivated behaviour, middle level, management staff, ministry of agriculture

### INTRODUCTION

It is Isaac Newton's first law of motion which explains that a body continues at the state of rest unless a force acts upon it. When a force acts upon it, it moves. The same idea can be extended to the process of taking actions by human beings. The idea of a voluntary action therefore has its underlying forces which propel an individual to work effectively and efficiently whether the individual is aware of such forces or not. These forces are the motives behind attitude towards work in any establishment.

All actors require motive forces to operate. Some actors confess going on drugs to induce performance. Children who are reluctant to attend schools need the persuasive words of parents to induce positive responses. A king within the African culture, needs the praise singers to create the right emotional climate for him to emerge from his palace, rise from his throne or even to come down from his car (Jibowo, 1987).

In this regard, for a manager to work efficiently and essentially he/she would require some motive forces to respond to. These motive forces tend to serve as guiding principles that could stimulate the officer to perform actively well from day to day. In a nut shell, the whole process described above is commonly referred to as motivation.

Motivation is therefore defined as the process of activating or energizing individuals to apply their capabilities to the task that is to be performed. It can be regarded as a process whereby a compelling force arouses, maintains and controls interest in achieving anticipated goals (De Forest, 1968). It can also be defined as the forces that cause people to behave in certain ways (Graham and Bennett, 1992).

**The importance of motivation:** One of the manager's primary tasks is to perform at high levels. This means working very hard to make positive contributions to the

organizational mission. Job performance in turn depends on motivation as well as ability and environment. The relationship is as follows:

$$P = f(M, A \text{ and } E)$$

Where,

P = Performance.

M = Motivation.

A = Ability.

E = Environment.

To attain high level of performance an employee must want to do the job (motivation), be capable of doing the job (ability) and have the right materials and equipment (environment). A deficiency in any of these factors will hurt performance (Burton, 1989).

The motivational framework that has evolved from current thinking consists of 6 stages:

- The starting point in the process is a need, which according to McClelland and Steele (1973) is defined as a deficiency experienced by a person.
- The need triggers a search for ways to satisfy it.
- Next comes a choice of goal directed behaviors.
- Performance is the act of carrying out the goal directed behaviours.
- Rewards or punishment follows as a result of the performance.
- Need deficiencies are reassessed by the employee.

In short, the basic premise of need theory is that human motivation is primarily caused by deficiencies in one or more important need categories.

Abraham (1943) argued that human beings are wanting animals and that they have innate desire to satisfy a given set of needs. Maslow believed that these needs are arranged in a Hierarchy of importance.

The 3 set of needs at the bottom of the hierarchy are called deficiency needs. For the individual to be fundamentally comfortable, deficiency needs must be satisfied. These three needs are physiological needs, security needs and belonging needs.

The 2 top sets of needs are termed growth needs, because they focus on personal growth and development. (Self actualization and esteem needs).

Physiological needs correspond to primary motives and include the need for shelter, food, sex and air which ought to be acquired in a basic monthly remuneration (salary).

Security needs are things that offer safety and security, such as adequate stability, as in the case of pension plan, protective clothing, freedom from worry and anxiety.

Belongingness needs include the need for love and affection and need to be accepted by one's peers which are primarily social in nature (e.g., friends in work group).

Esteem needs include two slightly different kinds of need the need for a self positive image and a self respect as well as the need to be respected by others as in the case of job title.

Self actualization needs involve realizing one's full potential that is, becoming what one is capable of. This might involve doing well in a challenging job.

The needs are arranged in order of importance, with those at the top being most important. This means that people are motivated to satisfy their physiological needs first. Once these are satisfied, security needs emerge as the primary sources of motivation. The escalation up the hierarchy continues until self actualization needs are satisfied.

In Botswana, the middle level management staff (managers) control the majority (about 60%) of the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). It is important for them to exhibit some self-motivating behaviours and also to know how to motivate the staff members under their supervision in order improve agricultural production in the Ministry. The question that arise therefore is what are the perceived self-motivating behaviours that could promote managers' efficiency and effectiveness at work?

**Purpose and objectives of the study:** The purpose of the study is to determine the factors promoting self-motivating behaviours among the middle level management staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Botswana. Specifically the study attempted to:

- Describe the personal characteristics of the middle level managers of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Botswana.
- To identify factors that could promote self-motivating behaviour among the middle level managers of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Botswana.
- To determine the relationships between the personal characteristics of the managers and self-motivating behaviours examined in the study.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

A descriptive type of research, using the questionnaire technique was employed in the study. The target population was the 30 middle level management

staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Botswana. The population was selected because they are direct supervisors of about 60% of the MoA's staff. By virtue of their positions, they should have acquired some inherent behaviours which they could use to motivate their supervisees and therefore would be in a position to provide useful data to achieve the objectives of the study.

The statements used in the domain were obtained from literature and the instrument used for data collection consisted of a 5 point likert scale type items developed around the 32 statements which literature has asserted could be used to measure motivating behaviours at work place.

The content validity of the instrument for data collection was established by 3 lecturers in the Department of Agricultural Education and Extension of Botswana College of Agriculture. Their suggestions were then incorporated in the instrument before use. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha was computed to determine internal consistency of the questionnaire and was found to be 0.93, indicating a good degree of reliability of the instrument for data collection.

The questionnaires were distributed to all the 30 middle level managers of MoA in July 2006 who were attending a training programme at the Centre for In service and Continuous Education (CICE), Botswana College of Agriculture. The questionnaires were collected back immediately after completion. The first part of the questionnaire asked the managers to rate their level of agreement with the factors promoting self motivating behaviours at work on a 5 point likert type rating scale with the following categories: 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = uncertain, 2 = disagree and 1 = strongly disagree.

The Training Officer in the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) provided the up-to-date list of the middle management staff who attended the training programme. This helped to control the frame error. Sampling error was not a threat because all the 30 middle management officers participated in the study. The names of the participants were verified to eliminate possible duplication. This helped to control selection error.

The data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies and percentages were used to present the information on personal characteristics of respondents. Data on self-motivational behaviours were analysed and presented using means standard deviation and rank order.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Objective 1:** Personal and characteristics of middle level manager at Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Botswana.

Table 1: Personal Characteristics of Middle level Managers of MoA, Botswana

Personal characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	24	80.0
Female	6	20.0
<b>Level of education</b>		
Certificate	-	-
Diploma	20	67.0
Degree	10	33.0
<b>Years of experience at MoA</b>		
6-10 years	-	-
11-15 years	11	37.0
16-20 years	14	47.0
21-25 years	5	16.0
26-years and above	-	-
<b>Age</b>		
20-30 years	-	-
31-40 years	18	60.0
41-50 years	11	36.7
51 years and above	1	3.3
<b>Place of award of highest degree</b>		
Local (Botswana)	19	63.0
Abroad	11	37.0
<b>Designation</b>		
District agricultural officer/	-	-
Regional agricultural officer	16	53.0
Scientific office/technical officer	14	47.0

Table 1 contains the data on personal characteristics of the respondents. The personal characteristics examined in the study were gender education, years of service, age, place of award of last degree and the designation of the officers. The total number of respondents were 30 out of which 24 (80%) were males while 6 (20%) were females. Regarding their educational level, 20 (67%) had Diploma degree while 10 (33%) had Bachelors' degree. None was at Certificate level. Regarding their period of Service at MoA 11 (37%) have served for between 11-15 years, 14, (47%) have served for between 16-20 years while 5 (16%) have served between 21-25 years at MoA. None has served for 26 years and above. A larger proportion of the respondents, 18 (60%) were between the age bracket of 31-40 years, 11, (36.7%) were between the age bracket of 41-50 years while 1 (3.3%) fell between the age of 51 years and above. The Regional Agricultural Officers were 16 (53%) while the Scientific Officers were 14, (47%) None of them was a District Agricultural Officer. From the Table 1, there were more men than women in the middle level managerial cadre in MoA. Many of them have diploma in Education obtained in the 80's and their years of service revealed a mean of 18 years in MoA. Few the managers had Bachelors' degree. Many of the respondents were relatively young and they obtained their highest qualifications in Botswana. Majority were designated as Regional Agricultural Officers.

**Objective 2:** Factors promoting self-motivating behaviours among the middle level managers at Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) Botswana.

Table 2: Means, SD and Ranking of factors promoting motivational forces of MoA Managers at work M = 30

Self-motivating Statements	Mean	SD	Rank	Decision
At my work place, I tend to:				
Show a competitive spirit	4.81	1.14	1	Agree
Take pride in my skill	3.39	1.59	29	Agree
Show enthusiasm for jobs	4.35	1.46	13	Agree
Prefer the type of job that yields immediate evidence of results	3.73	1.39	25	Agree
Be happy working on my own	2.26	1.64	32	Disagree
Like to set myself goals that are both realistic and challenging	4.74	1.52	2	Agree
Show initiative to do more than I am asked	4.66	1.40	9	Agree
Work well without close supervision	4.26	1.52	17	Agree
Enjoy taking personal responsibility	4.27	1.64	15	Agree
Prefer challenging tasks	4.17	1.40	18	Agree
Get upset if I think I am disliked or left out of things	2.41	1.46	31	Disagree
Like to make people feel at home	4.45	.95	10	Agree
Stress need for good relations	4.39	1.41	12	Agree
Like helping others outside work as well as inside work	4.73	1.39	5	Agree
Dislike working alone	4.74	1.52	2	Agree
Be sympathetic and sensitive towards others	4.67	1.39	8	Agree
Have many friends	4.45	.96	10	Agree
Respect other people's views	4.68	1.39	7	Agree
Enjoy the company of others	4.32	1.28	14	Agree
Avoid gossips among staff members	4.27	1.64	15	Agree
Like team work	3.63	1.55	26	Agree
Treat people with respect	4.73	1.37	5	Agree
Like recognition as a result of hardwork	4.74	1.53	2	Agree
Respect other people's feelings	4.16	1.44	19	Agree
Seek to persuade and influence people	4.03	1.28	21	Agree
Give help when it has not been asked for	3.62	1.42	27	Agree
Enjoy arguments	2.61	1.44	30	Disagree
Take pride in settling crisis	4.02	1.28	23	Agree
Value leadership roles	3.53	1.52	28	Agree
Understand the business and what makes it important	4.16	1.44	19	Agree
Value recognition and status	3.82	1.43	24	Agree
Be eager to take on greater responsibilities	4.03	1.51	21	Agree

NB: Strongly agree = 5; Agree = 4; Uncertain = 3; Disagree = 2; Strongly disagree = 1

Table 2 presents the self-motivating factors and the extend to which respondents perceived them as promoting self-motivating behaviours at work among the managers of MoA in Botswana. Means and standard deviations were used to describe the extend to which respondents agree with the self-motivating statements. The statements were anchored on a 5-point rating scale, as follows; 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = uncertain, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree. To interpret the data, a mean of 3 and above was used to denote agreement while the mean below 3 was used to denote disagreement. The results on Table 2 revealed that respondents agreed in varying degrees that 29 out of the 32 statements, with means ranging from 4.81-3.39, could promote self-motivating behaviours at work place. Only three statements had their means below 3, indicating that the

respondents disagreed that they could promote self-motivating factors at work. The 3 statements that the respondents disagreed with are; I am happy working on my own (mean = 2.26); I get upset if I think I am disliked or left out of things (mean = 2.41) and I enjoy arguments (mean = 2.61). The 3 statements attracted the rank of 32, 31 and 30, respectively. The implication of these findings is that the respondents disagreed with the statement that sought to know if the managers were loners or team oriented. This statement tend to support the general saying that no man is an island. Men by nature would like to work together with one and other to be able to achieve the goals and objectives of a particular establishment. Anything short of this, could spell doom for the establishment. In a similar manner, the managers reported that they are upset if they are disliked or left out of things. Again the implication of this is that we need to carry each other along in a particular set up if we want the goals and objects of the establishment to be achieved. The spirit of cooperation is highly essential to achieving goals and objectives of a set-up. The managers also reported that they hate arguments in the process of performing their official duties. Arguments can actually de-motivate people and seize them from performing optimally in an organizational set-up. It can also lead to communication breakdown within a society and can create animosity among workers.

The statement that sought to know if showing a competitive spirit is a factor of self motivation came 1st among all the 32 statements examined, with a mean of 4.81. There is no doubt about the fact that a competitive spirit can promote efficiency in a work environment thus leading to the attainment of the goals and objectives of an organisational set-up. The study tend to emphasis this fact and managers should take note of it in their work place. The statement that sought to know if a manager would like to earn recognition for work done came 2nd with a mean of 4.74. This is pointing to the fact that according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs men would like to be recognized and appreciated for a job well done. This is because men also would like to boost their ego and feel the sense of achievement. The statement which denotes that men do not like to work alone was ranked at par with love for recognition {mean = 4.74, rank = 2}. This statement was intended to affirm the reaction of managers to working alone in an establishment. The high rank attracted by this statement confirmed the low rank attracted by the statement denoting respondents' dislike for working alone. Another statement, I like to set goals that are realistic and challenging was ranked 2nd (mean = 4.74). This should be an eye opener to managers who fail to set goals and objectives to achieve their tasks.

There is no doubt that setting goals and objectives are good attributes of a good manager bearing in mind that the success of a particular manager should be measured using the impact made on his goals and objectives. The remaining statements that the respondents agreed with attracted very close means in varying degrees indicating their abilities to promote self-motivating behaviours among managers at work.

**Objective 3:** Relationship between selected Personal characteristics of managers and self-motivating factors at work.

The data collected and presented in Table 3 revealed the relationship between some selected personal characteristics of the managers and self-motivating behaviours at work in the Ministry of Agriculture, Botswana. To describe the inter-correlation coefficient of relationships, Davis (1971), Descriptors as indicated below were used.

Coefficient	Description
0.70 or higher	Very strong relationship
0.50-0.60	Substantial relationship
0.30-0.49	Moderate relationship
0.10-0.29	Low relationship
0.01-0.09	Negligible relationship

Concerning the age of the manager, the data showed a negligible relationship ( $r = 0.01-0.08$ ) between age of the managers and factors promoting self-motivating behaviours at work. The implication of this is that age of the managers had no influence on self-motivating behaviours at work. In the same vein, a negligible relationship ( $r = 0.01-0.06$ ) was found between the managers and the factors promoting motivating behaviours at work. The implication is that gender of the managers had no influence on self-motivating behaviours at work.

Regarding education, of the managers, the data revealed that with the exception of the statement, i like to earn recognition for job well done, there is a negligible relationship ( $r = 0.01-0.05$ ) between the educational level of the managers and the factors promoting motivating behaviours at work. This also implies that education of the managers had no influence on most of the self-motivating behaviours at work. However, there was a substantial relationship ( $r = 0.50$ ) between education of the managers and the statement, i like recognition for job well done. The implication of this is that people who are educated tend to be recognized for a job well done. It is typical of a well organized establishment to give rewards in terms of presents to staff members in recognition of job well done.

Table 3: Relationship between selected Personal characteristics of managers and self-motivating factors at work

Self-motivating Statements	Age (R)	Gender (rpb)	Educ. (rs)	Experience (R)
At my work place, I tend to:				
Show a competitive spirit	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.04
Take pride in my skill	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.01
Show enthusiasm for jobs	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.02
Prefer the type of job that yields immediate evidence of results	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.01
Be happy working on my own	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.02
Like to set myself goals that are both realistic and challenging	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.03
Show initiative to do more than I am asked	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.04
Work well without close supervision	0.06	0.02	0.05	0.02
Enjoy taking personal responsibility	0.03	0.04	0.01	0.01
Prefer challenging tasks	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.05
Get upset if I think I am disliked or left out of things	0.05	0.01	0.04	0.02
Like to make people feel at home	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.02
Stress need for good relations	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.05
Like helping others outside work as well as inside work	0.07	0.06	0.02	0.01
Dislike working alone	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03
Be sympathetic and sensitive towards others	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.05
Have many friends	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.04
Respect other people's views	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.05
Enjoy the company of others	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.02
Avoid gossips among members of staff	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.02
Like team work	0.04	0.01	0.01	0.05
Treat people with respect	0.02	0.04	0.04	
Like recognition for job work well done	0.03	0.03	0.50	0.05
Respect other people's feelings	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.04
Seek to persuade and influence people	0.07	0.04	0.03	0.02
Give help when it has not been asked for	0.01	0.05	0.04	0.03
Enjoy arguments	0.02	0.06	0.03	0.01
Take charge in a crisis	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.01
Value leadership roles	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.60
Understand the business and what keeps it going	0.05	0.01	0.01	0.44
Value recognition and status	0.08	0.02	0.01	0.03
Be eager to take on greater responsibilities	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.01

Again a substantial relationship ( $r = 0.60$ ) was found between work experience of the manager and the statement that wanted to know if managers would like to seek leadership or rather value leadership roles. This appears to be normal in that a man with a lot of experience should be willing to be in the position of leadership since he has got a lot of experience from which his staff could benefit from and which will enable the establishment to meet their goals and objectives successfully. In another related finding, a moderate relationship was found ( $r = 0.44$ ) between work experience of the managers and the statement, understanding what is expected to keep a particular business organization running. In most cases, business organizations have a blue print of what is expected of staff to keep the business going well. A thorough understanding of this blue-print will definitely serve as a self-motivating factor for a staff who is serious with his research.

In most cases copies of the blue-print of an organizational set up is normally given to officers when recruited as staff. This is to ensure that everybody within the business organization knows what is expected of them.

**Objective 3:** Relationship between selected personal characteristics of the managers and the factors promoting self-motivating behaviours at work.

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study men are more in the middle level management staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Botswana. Efforts should be geared towards improving the imbalances regarding gender. This seems to be the cry of the day and the Ministry should try and pursue a programme that will create gender balance as soon as possible.

The middle level management staff of the Ministry are mostly diploma holders from the Botswana College of Agriculture. Efforts should be made to upgrade these caliber of staff to degree level. Now that the Botswana College of Agriculture offers degree programmes in Agriculture, efforts should be made to send most of the staff back to the College to obtain bachelor's degrees. It is hoped that this will enable them become better managers. This is advisable particularly when majoring of the managers are still relatively young and are still in their productive years.

Majority of the managers agreed that most of the statements examined were factors that could promote self-motivating behaviours at work.

Most of the managers do not like working in isolation and therefore, are likely to prefer team work which could lead to better productivity, particularly when one believes in the adage that says, two heads are usually better than one.

Most of the managers believe that arguments should not be used to solve problems. This implies that they seem to prefer amicable solutions to any argumentative issues at work.

Most of the motivating behaviours examined attracted a negligible relationship between the managers and their personal characteristics. This is an indication that in most cases, the personal characteristics of the managers did not influence their self-motivating behaviours at work.

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