

THE NEXUS OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND LEADERSHIP: A STUDY OF THE GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES IN GEORGIA

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the interplay between employee motivation and leadership qualities within the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance of Georgia. A survey involving 821 government employees was conducted to identify the factors influencing employee motivation and the potential barriers associated with dissatisfaction with supervisors. The study uses statistical methods to identify critical factors shaping motivation, including principal component analysis and Spearman correlation coefficients. Key determinants include satisfaction with supervisors, external motivators, and performance evaluations. Employee engagement emerges as a significant driver, particularly for men and younger employees. The study also reveals variations in motivation related to gender and age, with women and senior employees displaying higher motivation levels. Furthermore, the research identifies dominant leadership qualities that impact employees' desire for managerial change, a primary motivational barrier. This study offers practical insights for enhancing employee motivation and optimizing leadership strategies, particularly within the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance.

Keywords: government employees, motivation, leadership, Georgia

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INTRODUCTION

Motivated employees play a critical role in fueling innovative ideas within a company. In today's highly competitive business landscape, where success hinges on creativity and adaptability, motivating employees is a significant managerial challenge (Pavlenchuk et al., 2023). As contemporary motivation theories depict, sustainable motivation stems from a complex interplay of internal and external factors (Siok et al., 2023; Lokman et al., 2022; Hirvi et al., 2023). It is most effective when anchored in a sense of purpose, making it less susceptible to transience. For example, according to the research by Workhuman and Gallup, elevating recognition to a pivotal component of the company culture can yield substantial benefits for a 10,000-person organization with an already highly engaged workforce. Such an approach has the potential to generate impressive annual savings, as much as \$16.1 million, by significantly mitigating the costs associated with employee turnover (Workhuman, 2022).

The study "The Impact of Employee Motivation on Organizational Commitment and Job Performance" found a positive relationship between employee motivation, organizational commitment, and job performance. Highly motivated employees are more committed to their organizations and tend to perform better (Tella et al., 2007).

The comprehensive report «Incentives, Motivation, and Workplace Performance: Research & Best Practices» examines the effectiveness of various incentive programs and their impact on employee motivation and workplace performance. It highlights how well-designed incentive systems can increase productivity and cost savings (The International Society for Performance Improvement, 2002).

Throughout the motivational journey, various hurdles may emerge. Goal-related frustrations, interpersonal conflicts, and performance-related anxieties are common obstacles employees face (Latham & Pinder, 2005). In this context, it is essential to appreciate that employees collectively endeavor to overcome these challenges to pursue their objectives and rewards, highlighting the intricate relationship between employee motivation and leadership in organizational behavior and management (Bass

& Riggio, 2006). This underscores the significance of effective leadership in guiding and supporting employees through the motivation process, ultimately contributing to the organization's success.

In the ever-evolving landscape of the modern workplace, the relationship between employee motivation and organizational leadership has emerged as a pivotal dynamic that significantly influences an organization's success and sustainability (Li et al., 2019). A motivated workforce drives productivity, creativity, and employee engagement, which is essential to achieving strategic objectives and maintaining a competitive edge (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017). Conversely, leadership is critical in shaping an organization's culture, vision, and direction. It sets the tone for employee morale and motivation, ultimately impacting the organizational climate. This interplay between employee motivation and leadership is of immense importance, as it offers valuable insights into how organizations can optimize their workforce's potential and enhance their capacity to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing business environment (Masmarulan, 2022).

The features of relationships between leaders and employee motivation in Georgia are to exhibit universal elements shared with other regions while simultaneously embodying unique attributes shaped by the intricate blend of Georgian culture, economic conditions, and social dynamics. Contemporary research highlights various challenges Georgian organizations face in motivating their employees. These issues encompass the absence of career progression prospects, inadequate compensation and benefits packages, imbalances between work and personal life, ambiguous communication channels and expectations, and many other factors that collectively underscore the pervasive issue of ineffective leadership within these organizations (Yasar & Chinelo, 2015; Sakvarelidze, 2018).

The study titled "Managerial Challenges of Georgian Leaders" offers compelling insights into the pressing challenges faced by leaders in Georgia. The figures extracted from this research, reflecting the top managerial concerns, are as follows (Burduli, 2016).

A significant majority, comprising 64% of respondents, identified time management as the

foremost management issue for Georgian leaders. This statistic underscores the importance of effective time allocation and prioritization for leaders in Georgia. Time management is a universal challenge that transcends geographical boundaries (Burduli, 2016). According to 56.3% of those surveyed, Georgian leaders' second most critical management task is their capacity to listen to others and consider competent advice. This figure emphasizes the significance of open communication and collaboration in leadership, aligning with global leadership principles (Burduli, 2016). Nearly half of the respondents, 48.9%, identified a clear vision and short- and long-term goals as the third primary management problem among Georgian leaders. This statistic underscores the crucial role of setting direction and fostering goal-oriented leadership, consistent with established leadership theories worldwide (Burduli, 2016). The study reveals that 47.2% of participants believe that Georgian leaders often avoid admitting their mistakes and learning from them. This statistic highlights the widespread issue of leaders' reluctance to acknowledge errors and aligns with a global emphasis on self-awareness, humility, and a culture of continuous improvement (Burduli, 2016).

These figures, reflecting the management problems in Georgia, are consistent with the findings of various international researchers who have explored leadership dynamics across diverse countries. The unique context of Georgia, a post-Soviet country grappling with economic challenges, indeed impacts leadership and motivation.

The study also points to a fundamental issue in Georgian leadership - the prevalence of incompetent leaders (Burduli, 2016). This is attributed to leadership positions often being secured not based on skills, merit, or talent but through nepotism and patronage, which are primary avenues to success in the region. This prevailing value system rewards loyalty and dependence on others over independence and merit earned through hard work (Council of Europe, 2017). Furthermore, the imbalance in gender representation in leadership positions, compounded by nepotism and patronage, tends to favor men over women, influencing leadership practices in Georgia. This leads to a stark inability of Georgian leaders to make autonomous

decisions, as they were historically followers who were instructed rather than empowered to make decisions (UN Women, 2023).

There is a need for more academic or scientific studies in Georgia that explore the dynamics between leaders and how they influence the motivation of their employees. The lack of such studies suggests that this area of potential importance must be thoroughly examined. This study aimed to identify the key factors influencing government employee motivation within the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance. It sought to understand the impact of these factors on employee motivation and identify leadership qualities that might trigger a desire for leadership change among employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The topic above has been the subject of research by multiple authors. Lee and Raschke (2016) studied certain factors affecting motivation. The authors point out that high motivation results in outstanding organizational performance. The paper's objective was to demonstrate the advancement made by motivated individuals (Lee & Raschke, 2016). Regardless of the type and size of the organization, they strive to have a positive attitude with their colleagues. However, it should be noted that encouraging employees should be done in various ways due to their diverse demands.

Motivational theories provide a solid foundation for comprehending the multifaceted nature of employee motivation. For instance, Maslow's hierarchy of needs and McClelland's theory of the need for achievement underscore that individuals are primarily driven by their needs, which external motivators or incentives can potentially fulfill (Rojas et al., 2023; Siok et al., 2023). Vroom's expectancy theory further reinforces this notion, asserting that motivation hinges on the expectation of rewards linked to goal achievement (Lokman et al., 2022; Ismawati et al., 2023). Incentives, tangible or intangible, can serve as catalysts for motivating employees, aligning with these theoretical frameworks. Given that employee demands and motivation levels range from one company to another, understanding what encourages and boosts employee motivation and organizational performance is essential (Lokman et al., 2022;

Katsitadze & Natsvlishvili, 2020; Kharadze et al., 2023).

Satisfaction with supervisors, a crucial element in the motivation equation, can be examined through several theoretical lenses. The Leader-Member Exchange theory elucidates that strong leader-employee relationships can enhance engagement and loyalty, thus boosting motivation (Hirvi et al., 2023). Expectancy Theory accentuates the role of leaders in shaping employees' expectations through clear goal-setting and promises of reward, which, in turn, can impact motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2023; Pirtskhalaishvili et al., 2023). Social Exchange Theory highlights the significance of employees feeling autonomous, competent, and aligned with organizational goals (Ahmad et al., 2023). Leaders who facilitate fulfilling these psychological needs are likely to foster higher employee motivation.

The leader's behavior must affect employee motivation and security (Fruhen et al., 2022). In the study "Perceived Impacts of Company Workplace Health Promotion on the Employment Relationship," the authors underscore Workplace Health Promotion as an integral element of Workplace Health Management (Fehér & Reich, 2020). The primary objective of this study, conducted by Fehér and Reich (2020), was to investigate the influence of WHP on motivational and emotional aspects within the employment relationship.

The influence of satisfaction with supervisors, as well as the leadership qualities of managers on employee motivation, appears multifaceted and nuanced, as suggested by Resource Exchange Theory and Social Determinism Theory. The impact of gender and age on employee motivation is a particularly intricate area of study (Hitka et al., 2018; Sigmundsson et al., 2022). It acknowledges that gender and age influence the psychological facets of motivation, including self-esteem, ambition levels, and the pursuit of goals (Pirtskhalaishvili et al., 2021). These factors may be linked to varying values and life priorities among different genders and age groups, ultimately resulting in differing impacts on employee motivation (Hitka et al., 2018; Sigmundsson et al., 2022).

Based on the reasoning discussed above, the study crafted the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Employee motivation is contingent upon several factors, including

gender, age, external incentives, the appraisal of one's work, and the degree of contentment with one's supervisor.

The article "Motivational Approach to Team Service Performance: Role of participative leadership and team-inclusive Climate" explores how participative leadership affects the formulation of team service goals and how they are approached, ultimately resulting in increased performance (Ali et al., 2022). Participative leadership is delegating responsibility to subordinates and involving them in decision-making to address problems and create strategies (Wang et al., 2022).

Employee motivation is intricately linked to their level of engagement in the workplace. Employee motivation is often heightened when individuals perceive their work as meaningful and essential. This sense of value instills a deep-seated motivation as employees recognize the significance of their contributions to the organization (Kossyva et al., 2023). Completing tasks successfully and experiencing a sense of accomplishment can be a potent motivator. Employees who derive satisfaction from completing their duties tend to be more motivated. Engaged employees typically foster positive relationships with colleagues and management (Kumari et al., 2021). Social support within the workplace can substantially boost motivation by creating a comfortable and less stressful environment for employees. Engaged employees tend to exhibit a proactive approach to skill development and personal growth. This ongoing development enhances their capabilities and is a solid motivator to excel in their work (Gillman, , 2023).

It is important to note that these factors underpin the relationship between an employee's work engagement and motivation and are highly individualized. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect these factors to manifest differently among various demographic groups, including men and women and younger and older employees. These individual differences can lead to unique motivational dynamics within the workplace.

Considering the comprehensive comparative analysis of previous research findings, we have formulated the following hypothesis in our study:

Hypothesis 2: The connection between an employee's engagement in their work and their

motivation exhibits variations contingent on their age and gender.

The relationship between leader qualities motivates staff and is a complex interplay influenced by various leadership styles, cultural factors, and organizational contexts. Transformational leaders with charisma and vision often encourage employees and reduce the desire for leadership change by inspiring a sense of purpose and growth (Steinmann et al., 2018). Transactional leaders who focus on task accomplishment and rewards may not significantly enhance motivation, potentially leading employees to seek transformational leaders (Meirinhos et al., 2023). Servant leaders emphasizing empathy and serving others positively impact motivation, potentially reducing the desire for leadership change due to their supportive qualities (Kock et al., 2019). Authoritarian leaders may decrease motivation by stifling autonomy, prompting a strong desire for a change in leadership toward empowering figures (Steinmann et al., 2018). Leaders of different genders bring unique qualities that influence motivation, potentially affecting the desire for gender diversity in leadership (Galsanjigmed & Sekiguchi, 2023). The alignment of leader qualities with organizational culture can affect motivation and the desire for leadership change, depending on the fit between personal qualities and corporate values. Considering these distinctive characteristics, the study has put forth the following scientific hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: The leadership qualities exhibited by a manager serve as crucial predictors of turnover intentions among employees, and their gender and age influence how employees perceive a manager's leadership qualities.

METHODOLOGY

This study relies on a unique dataset gathered from an anonymous questionnaire survey, which comprises 38 variables and responses from 821 participants. The survey was administered remotely from January to May 2023 using Google Forms. The questionnaire provides a list of indicators and details on converting them into points for subsequent statistical analysis (Google Form, 2023). The questionnaire questions were constructed based on established theories of motivation, drawing from the works of Rojas, Méndez, and Watkins-Fassler (2023); Siok et al. (2023); Lokman et al. (2022); and Hirvi et al. (2023). The survey participants comprised government employees from the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance in Georgia. The sample population of 821 respondents was randomly selected, ensuring a representative cross-section of various age groups and genders. The survey's anonymity and voluntary participation further underscore the representativeness of the results (Taherdoost, 2017). Statistica 12.0 was employed for the analysis of research findings. Cronbach's alpha was applied to evaluate the questionnaire's reliability (see Table 1).

Table 1: Reliability Assessment of the Questionnaire "The Nexus of Employee Motivation and Leadership in Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and Ministry of Finance"

Survey Question	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value	Survey Question	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value	Survey Question	Cronbach's Alpha coefficient value
Q8*	0.83	Q19	0.87	Q29	0.90
Q9	0.79	Q20	0.91	Q30	0.81
Q10	0.98	Q21	0.77	Q31	0.87
Q11	0.93	Q22	0.85	Q32	0.83
Q12	0.88	Q23	0.89	Q33	0.92
Q13	0.94	Q24	0.82	Q34	0.84
Q14	0.82	Q25	0.74	Q35	0.76
Q15	0.80	Q26	0.94	Q36	0.73
Q16	0.89	Q27	0.88	Q37	0.86
Q17	0.90	Q28	0.84	Q38	0.88
Q18	0.85				

* - Survey Question Symbol (Google Form, 2023)

Source: Authors' finding

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the questionnaire was found to be 0.86. According to Hair et al. (2017), a coefficient value falling within the range of 0.7-0.9 suggests a high level of reliability for the questionnaire.

The following methods were employed to test the hypotheses: Principal Component Method - This method was utilized to identify the factors influencing employee motivation in the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance. The quantitative data analyzed in this method were the scores assigned to the questionnaire questions. This approach allowed for data reduction without compromising information content. The integral values of the principal components were computed using formula (1), which was subsequently used in the statistical analysis.

$$F_{ik} = \frac{b_{jk} - \bar{b}_j}{\sigma} \times \frac{l_{ij}}{\sum_{j=1}^n |l_{ij}|} \quad (1)$$

where F_{ik} - represents the value of the i -th principal component for the k -th respondent, where i can be {1, 2};

b_{jk} - signifies the score for the j -th question of the questionnaire that contributes to the i -th principal component for the k -th respondent;

\bar{b}_j - represents the arithmetic average score for the j -th question (j -th indicator);

σ - denotes the standard deviation of the score for the j -th question;

l_{ij} - represents the factor loading between the i -th principal component and the j -th indicator;

n - number of indicators that contribute to the i -th principal component.

The study employed various statistical methods for analysis and assessment:

Kaiser Criterion for Principal Component Selection: The Kaiser criterion was utilized to determine the optimal number of principal components. Factors with loadings ≥ 0.7 were considered to constitute the structure of the main components, following the guidelines of Menke (2018). This approach helps in identifying the most significant factors in the dataset.

Chi-Square Test for Categorical Variables: To examine differences in motivation levels among

various employee categories such as gender and age, the chi-square test was applied. This test is appropriate for assessing associations between categorical variables.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient: To explore the relationships between employee motivation, work involvement, external motivators, employee performance evaluation, and satisfaction with the supervisor, the Spearman correlation coefficient was chosen. This correlation method was selected due to the nature of the data distribution, which did not conform to the assumptions of normality.

Probit Model for Leadership Qualities: The Probit model was employed to identify the dominant leadership qualities that influence employees' desire to change their manager. This model was used to provide an analytical description of this relationship. The choice of the Probit model is driven by the binary nature of the dependent variable, "Would you like to change the current leader?" which offers "Yes" or "No" as answer options.

The study's robust methodology and various statistical techniques contribute to a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing employee motivation and leadership in the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance.

In the calculations for the chi-square test, Spearman correlation coefficients, and the construction of the Probit model, the results were considered statistically significant at various significance levels (α levels):

- $p = 0.1$
- $p = 0.05$
- $p = 0.01$

These significance levels determine the threshold for considering results as statistically significant.

RESULTS

The outcome of the factor analysis revealed the identification of two main components that significantly influence staff motivation within the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance. This finding suggests that these two main components are crucial in shaping and understanding the factors that impact employee motivation in this context (Table 2).

Table 2: Main Components Influencing Staff Motivation in the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Finance

Questionnaire question	Factor loading*
<i>Satisfaction with the supervisor (dispersion 44.6%)</i>	
Does the leader consider the opinions you offer?	0.783
Do you think that your motivation level depends on the leader's behavior?	0.714
How does the supervisor react to the mistake you made?	0.887
Would you like to change the current leader?	0.824
Do you think that your supervisor is gifted with leadership skills?	-0.835
Do you think that your supervisor evaluates employees objectively?	-0.701
Do you think that your supervisor shows empathy towards employees?	-0.746
Do you think your supervisor has social skills?	-0.804
Do you think that your manager has the ability to motivate employees?	-0.779
Do you feel like a valuable member of the organization?	0.901
Does the manager have informal relationships with employees in addition to official relationships?	0.814
My supervisor supports me in my career development	0.739
<i>The factors relating to external incentives and the assessment of employee performance (dispersion 38.6%)</i>	
Do you think that your motivation level depends on the pay?	0.905
Do you think that your motivation level depends on working conditions?	0.834
Do you think that your motivation level depends on the team environment in the company?	0.835
I value work results (such as promotion, recognition, etc.)	0.814
I am satisfied when I receive positive results from work (such as promotion, recognition, etc.) and laugh at negative results.	0.795
Overall, how motivated are you to get the job done?	0.914
If the quantity and quality of my work will increase too much, the evaluation of my work	0.901
If the quantity and quality of my work decreases, the evaluation of my work also decreases	0.836
My work is evaluated by the quantity and quality of the work	0.880
The results of work (promotion, recognition, etc.) that I receive are less related to the evaluation of my work	0.811

(*) signifies the factor loadings between responses to questionnaire questions and the corresponding principal component

Source: Authors' finding

The identified main components can be characterized as follows:

- **Satisfaction with the Supervisor:** This component is determined by various factors, including how much the manager considers the opinions of subordinates, supports their career development, objectively evaluates employees, demonstrates empathy, exhibits leadership qualities, forgives mistakes, and motivates employees. It also reflects how the manager ensures employee involvement in teamwork.

- **External Motivators and Evaluation of Employee Work:** This component encompasses elements such as a competitive level of remuneration, which is tied to the results of an employee's work, and the provision of safe and comfortable working conditions.
- **The integral values of these principal components,** computed using formula (1), were employed to evaluate and test the research hypotheses.

To test hypothesis 1, specifically to assess the extent to which employee motivation depends

on gender and age, a chi-square test was utilized (refer to Table 3). This test aims to determine whether there is a significant association

between these demographic variables and the level of employee motivation.

Table 3: Chi-Square Test Examining the Association Between Government Employee Motivation Level, Gender, and Age

Grouping variable	The frequency with which groups of respondents assigned specific ratings to the question "Overall, how motivated are you to get the job done?" 100%				
	Score «1»	Score «2»	Score «3»	Score «4»	Score«5»
<i>The motivation level is categorized by gender (Chi-square = 7.21*)</i>					
Female	15.38	19.84	23.89	25.91	14.98
Male	18.99	25.09	27.00	20.03	8.89
<i>The motivation level is categorized by age (Chi-square = 26.62**)</i>					
Age 18-28	36.36	31.82	13.64	9.09	9.09
Age 29-39	23.66	25.81	27.96	12.90	9.68
Age 40-49	21.94	27.55	28.57	11.73	10.20
Age 50-59	17.03	18.84	23.19	28.99	11.96
Age 60-64	11.05	24.74	26.32	27.37	10.53
Age 65 and above	13.64	20.45	34.09	22.73	9.09

(*), (**)- statistically significant chi-square test at significance levels of $p = 0.1$ and $p = 0.05$, respectively
 Source: Authors' finding

The analysis of motivation levels by age category reveals a general trend of increasing motivation with age, except for individuals aged 65 and above. The weighted average assessment of motivation rises from 2.23 for personnel aged 18-28 to 3.02 for personnel aged 60-64, as illustrated in Table 3.

Furthermore, the data in Table 3 indicate that women tend to be more motivated to work than men. The weighted average assessment of motivation for women is 3.05, while for men, it is 2.75.

The Chi-square test results demonstrate a

statistically significant relationship between employee motivation, gender, and age, with significance levels of 0.1 and 0.05.

Despite variations in motivation levels based on gender and age, there is a strong link between motivation, external motivators, fair employee performance assessments, and satisfaction with supervisors across all employee categories. This connection is supported by Spearman's correlation coefficients, which are statistically significant at the 0.05 and 0.01 significance levels, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Matrix of Spearman Correlation Coefficients between Motivation Level, External Motivators Development, Employee Performance Assessment, and Satisfaction with the Supervisor

Indicator	Motivation level	The comprehensive indicator of satisfaction with the supervisor	The broad indicator of the development of external motivators and performance assessment
Motivation level ¹	1.00	0.81***	0.92***
Integral indicator of satisfaction with the supervisor ²	0.81***	1.00	0.68**
Integral indicator of the development of external motivators and performance assessment	0.92***	0.68**	1.00

(¹)- the ratings for the survey question "How motivated are you to complete your job tasks overall?";
 (^{2,3})- the values of the principal components (as shown in Table 2), computed using formula (1);

(**) - correlation coefficient, statistically significant at $p=0.05$;

(***) - correlation coefficient, statistically significant at $p=0.01$

Source: Authors' finding

In the examination of hypothesis 2, we explored the potential link between employee involvement in work, as indicated by scores on the question "How involved are you in your

work? Do you feel part of the team?" and the level of employee motivation, as determined by scores on the question "Overall, how motivated are you to get the job done?" (Table 5).

Table 5: The values of Spearman's correlation coefficients, assessing the connection between employees' involvement in their work and their level of motivation, stratified by gender and age

Indicator	Gender		Age					
	Female	Male	18-28	29-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	65 and above
Spearman correlation coefficient	0.62**	0.84***	0.88***	0.82***	0.80***	0.63**	0.58*	0.53*

(*) - correlation coefficient, statistically significant at;

(**) - correlation coefficient, statistically significant at $p=0.05$;

(***) - correlation coefficient, statistically significant at $p=0.01$

Source: Authors' finding

To evaluate hypothesis 3, Probit models were constructed. In these models, the dependent variable is based on the respondents' answers to the question, "Would you like to change the current leader?" The independent variables consist of the responses to the questionnaire

questions that constitute the "Satisfaction with the Supervisor" factor (Table 6). The table displays only the independent variables that exhibit a statistically significant impact on the resultant variable at the $p = 0.1, 0.05, \text{ and } 0.01$ significance levels.

Table 6: Probit Models Evaluating Managerial Leadership Qualities Influencing Staff's Desire to Change Managers in the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and Ministry of Finance

Independent variable	Grouping variable							
	Gender		Age					
	Female	Male	18-28	29-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	65 and above
My supervisor supports me in my career development	0.34*	0.45**	0.72***	0.43**	0.47**	0.30*	-	-
Does the leader consider the opinions you offer?	0.62***	0.47**	0.32*	0.48**	0.49**	0.43**	0.81***	0.68**
Do you feel like a valuable member of the organization?	0.46**	0.41**	0.68***	0.84***	0.75***	0.83***	0.49**	0.33*
Overall, how motivated are you to get the job done?	0.41**	0.48**	0.43**	0.39**	0.50**	0.48**	0.66***	0.78***
Do you think that your manager can motivate employees?	-0.87***	-0.64**	-0.68**	-0.61**	-0.98***	-1.02***	-0.85***	-0.70**
Do you think that your supervisor evaluates employees objectively?	-0.65**	-0.59**	-0.96***	-0.58**	-0.67**	-0.61**	-0.63**	-0.98***
Constant	-0.76	-1.15	-1.34	-1.85	-1.64	-1.08	-1.23	-0.76
p-value	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.04	0.01	0.02

(***), (**), and (*) indicate level of significant at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

p-value – model significance level

Source: Authors' finding

The constructed models are statistically significant at a significance level of 0.05, suggesting their adequacy and indicating that at least one independent variable significantly impacts the dependent variable in each model.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Based on the robust empirical evidence amassed through our research, we can confidently affirm the integrity of Hypothesis 1. This hypothesis posits that multifaceted factors, including gender, age, the prominence of external motivators, performance assessments, and satisfaction with supervisors, substantially shape government employee motivation within the ministries under investigation. Our findings align seamlessly with the conception of Siok, Sim, and Rahmat (2023), Fruhen et al. (2022) framework underpinning this hypothesis, substantiated by a wealth of prior research (Hitka et al., 2018; Sigmundsson et al., 2022).

These outcomes can be elucidated by the human inclination towards stability and security, a preference particularly pronounced in women and older employees. Having a penchant for the ministry's structured and predictable work environment, this demographic cohort finds solace in the ministry's well-defined and organized nature. Additionally, women and older workers often prioritize attaining a work-life balance, an aspiration that draws them to the ministry due to its regimented work schedules, fostering a harmonious coexistence between their professional and personal lives.

The finding that older government employee groups demonstrate higher motivation for work highlights the importance for organizations to delve deeper into the demands and motivations of the younger generation. To effectively engage and harness the potential of younger employees, organizations are encouraged to consider the following recommendations:

- Develop tailored strategies for engaging younger employees, considering their unique preferences, values, and motivations. Recognize that younger workers may have different expectations regarding work and life, and design programs that align with their aspirations;
- Facilitate mentorship programs where experienced older employees can pass on their knowledge and skills to younger

counterparts. This fosters knowledge transfer and promotes positive intergenerational interactions, contributing to a more harmonious work environment: create open and accessible feedback channels where younger employees can express their ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Act upon this feedback to demonstrate that their opinions are valued and respected, fostering a sense of involvement and commitment and providing opportunities for skill development, career growth, and personal advancement to cater to the ambitions of younger employees. Design programs that help them see a clear path for advancement within the organization, enhancing their motivation to excel in their roles; recognize the importance of work-life balance for younger workers. Promote flexible work arrangements and family-friendly policies that allow them to effectively manage their professional and personal lives. An organization that values this balance will likely attract and retain younger talent.

The findings support Hypothesis 2, that employee work engagement positively affects their motivation. This aligns with research and studies, including Kossyva et al. (2023), and Kumari et al. (2021). This effect is statistically significant regardless of age and gender. However, the strength of the relationship between the studied indicators varies depending on the age and gender of employees. The positive impact of employee engagement on employee motivation is more significant for men and younger employees. Women value work-life balance more, so work engagement is less important. With age, the importance of involvement in work decreases since employees gain experience and become more independent and confident in their abilities, which reduces dependence on the team. They are more focused on individual tasks and goals. External motivators (pay level, working conditions, recognition) become more significant with age. These outcomes lead to important insights for organizations.

While recognizing the universal impact of engagement on motivation, organizations should consider customizing their engagement strategies. Acknowledge that for men and younger employees, engagement holds

heightened significance. Therefore, design initiatives and programs that resonate with their motivational triggers. Acknowledge that women place a higher value on work-life balance. Organizational policies and practices should cater to this preference to enhance female employees' job satisfaction and motivation. As employees mature and gain experience, their orientation toward work engagement may change. They become more self-reliant and confident, shifting their focus towards individual tasks and personal goals. Organizations should promote opportunities for skill development and career growth and provide competitive compensation to motivate and retain these employees. Recognize that external motivators like compensation, working conditions, and recognition gain prominence with age. Organizations should ensure that these elements are adequately addressed to maintain the motivation of experienced employees. Regularly assess the motivation and engagement levels of the workforce through surveys and feedback mechanisms. Employ these insights to fine-tune strategies and policies, ensuring alignment with the evolving needs of the employee demographic. Organizations can cultivate a dynamic and inclusive work environment that optimizes employee engagement and motivation by adopting these insights and tailoring their approach to age and gender-related preferences.

Based on the analysis, the following data emerged:

- A significant 70.8% of respondents who feel their opinions are disregarded express a desire to change the current leader.
- An overwhelming 79.1% of respondents who do not perceive themselves as valuable members of the organization harbor the intention to replace the current leader.
- Approximately 61.6% of respondents wish to replace the current leader because they believe the leader does not foster career growth.
- An extensive 88.5% of respondents express the desire to change their current manager, as they perceive the manager's evaluations of employees to be lacking in objectivity.
- A substantial 84.2% of respondents are inclined to seek a change in their current leader, as they feel that their leader falls short in motivation.

These statistics underscore the significance of leadership qualities and their impact on employee attitudes and intentions within the organization.

These factors exhibit statistically significant relevance across nearly all categories of personnel. Nevertheless, while these factors bear universal importance, their significance varies between different demographic groups, lending credence to hypothesis 3. Notably, these disparities revolve around the manager's role in career development, an aspect that holds particular relevance for younger employees but needs more statistical significance for those aged 60 and older.

Survey respondents, when asked, "Do you believe your leader's behavior influences your motivation?" frequently responded with "Often" or "Always." Considering this perspective, it can be inferred that the prominent attributes contributing to the desire for a change in leadership also serve as primary motivational barriers.

Based on the findings confirming Hypothesis 3, which highlights that the significance of leadership qualities in career development varies across demographic groups, organizations should consider the following recommendations. Create clear and transparent career pathways within the organization. Ensure that all employees, regardless of age, understand how to advance in their careers. This can include specific milestones, training opportunities, and potential leadership roles. Offer flexible work arrangements that accommodate employees of different ages. This can consist of options for part-time work, phased retirement, or flexible scheduling to align with individual needs. Provide leadership training for all managers that emphasizes inclusivity and adaptability. Encourage leaders to know government employees' needs and motivations across different age groups and genders. Promote diversity and inclusion initiatives that address generational diversity as well. Encourage a culture that values the contributions of employees from all age groups.

In summary, this research provides practical insights and novel findings that can inform tailored HR strategies, leadership development initiatives, and cross-generational collaboration efforts within the Georgian Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development and the Ministry

of Finance and potentially serve as a reference for similar government agencies facing workforce motivation challenges.

However, it is important to acknowledge several limitations in the research. Firstly, while suitable for its scope, the study's sample size of 821 respondents may only partially represent the diversity of demographic groups and organizational settings. This limits the broader generalizability of the findings beyond this specific sector and region. Additionally, the study employs a cross-sectional design, offering a snapshot of data at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies tracking motivation changes over time could provide a more comprehensive understanding. Moreover, the study's focus on a specific ministry sector in Tbilisi may not reflect the broader context of other industries or regions. Factors influencing motivation can vary significantly across different organizational and cultural contexts. Furthermore, the study does not extensively address cultural or socio-economic influences on motivation, which could provide a richer context for the findings.

While this study has its limitations, these constraints also delineate potential future research directions. For instance, the cross-sectional design, which captures a static moment in time, suggests the value of longitudinal studies to track changes in motivation over extended periods. Furthermore, the cultural and socio-economic limitations point to the significance of conducting comparative research in different cultural and socio-economic contexts to discern the impact of these variables on motivation.

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