

# Covid-19 and the work motivation: Hotel employees based on Herzberg's two factor-theory perspective

Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts (JTHCA)  
2021, Vol. 13 (3) pp 53-63  
© The Author(s) 2021  
Reprints and permission:  
UITM Press  
Submit date: 26th July 2021  
Accept date: 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
Publish date: 30<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Lu'luwatin Rosdiana Aprilia\***

**Sri Marini**

**Sari Melinda Rosalina De Vos**

Hospitality Study Program, Akademi Pariwisata NHI Bandung, Bandung Barat, Indonesia

*luluwatinrosdianaaprilia@gmail.com*

*llin.marin3@gmail.com*

*melindadevos94@gmail.com*

## Proposed citation:

Aprilia, L. R., Marini, S., & De Vos, S. M. R. (2021). Covid-19 and the work motivation: Hotel employees based on Herzberg's two factor-theory perspective. *Journal of Tourism, Hospitality & Culinary Arts*, 13(3), pp 53-63.

## Abstract

The covid-19 has an impact on the lodging industry. The research goal is to recognise the demands of employees in order to successfully enhance job performance by improving their motivation during this pandemic. The study method utilised was a descriptive approach with a total sampling technique. The results demonstrate that the Motivator Factor is perceived well enough that it keeps employees motivated to work during the pandemic, and the Hygiene Factors are perceived well enough that employees are satisfied, causing their work motivation to remain high even during the pandemic.

## Keywords:

Work motivation, Covid-19, Herzberg's two factor theory

## 1 Introduction

Coronavirus, a lethal illness caused by the recently discovered Coronavirus, was first detected in December 2019 in Wuhan, China's Hubei Province. The virus is mostly transmitted by direct contact with a contaminated individual (CDC, 2020) and can create symptoms similar to influenza and the common cold (for example, fever, hack, tiredness, and body throbs), however it is necessary to be far more lethal. The spread of the infection accelerated in mid-January 2020, and on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a worldwide pandemic. While the illness flare-up is, above all, a human disaster, its financial impact is also troubling. COVID-19 sent global monetary shockwaves within half a month of the flare-up, impacting financial exchanges, buyer confidence, and global stockpile chains. The tourist and travel sector has imploded (Azevêdo, 2020).

No exception to the accommodation service industry. Many have been affected because of the coronavirus, one of which is related to the work motivation of employees. Employees are allocated to the departments based on their skills and abilities. This process assigns employees to the department in which the Human Resources department perceives that a particular individual will deliver high work performances.

Perception is interpreted differently to everyone; one may feel like a certain task is difficult to do while another may find it simple and has no problems completing it. One may enjoy the task as much and therefore result in an adequate result. The way we choose, receive and interpret a certain information relates to our perception. Boyd et al. in Fadila and Lestari (2013) defines "Perception is the process by which a person selects, organizes and interprets information".

After we perceive certain information, we tend to build up expectations of the outcome. The Expectancy theory of motivation by Victor H. Vroom developed in 1964 explains that individuals use three perceptions to make decisions depending on the particular task: expectancy, instrumentality and valence. This motivation which builds the initiative of a person into completing their work is also based on the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of their job. However, when a person is unsatisfied with their work, this means they have a negative attitude towards it.

It is important for companies to pay attention to their work forces, specifically related to the company's employee welfare. Humans have their needs of life and a way of satisfying those needs is by fulfilling their goods and services. According to Pratama (2015) "In general, if someone works in order to be able to meet their daily needs, someone will be more active and enthusiastic if they get additional rewards and satisfying rewards. Such as giving a charter, distributing bonuses, and so on". Additional rewards refer to additional remuneration, also known as: incentives. Incentives are additional rewards, aside from the basic salary, that are implemented to employees based on their performances. In line with this statement, the results of the study state that hospitality employees vary in their inclination for some material and non-material

things connoting award and acknowledgment. The board should bring these distinctions into account when contriving such motivators. The fulfilment that representatives infer can be fortified by zeroing in on Herzberg's sparks while representative disappointment could be forestalled by tending to cleanliness factors. Human asset work force can make a proportion of progress while creating and regulating a pay program that animates exertion identified with work, errands, or achievement of objectives. While roused representatives are required to perform better, worker efficiency as indicated by certain exploration is identified with the degree of addressing ones' necessities. It is, subsequently, significant for associations in the friendliness business to think about the plan of an even however adaptable award acknowledgment framework that serves spurring workers toward the accomplishment of hierarchical objectives and address their own issues.

V Hotel & Residence Bandung is one of the hotels located in the city of Bandung which is located in a residential complex and is quite remote and far from the crowds of the highway. Only a few segments know that the place is a hotel. During this covid-19 pandemic, this hotel is quite able to survive, because this hotel sparks motivation for employees by using incentives such as: employee appreciation, service charges, points, appraisals and extra offs. However, during the COVID-19 V Hotel & Residence Bandung dropped to 45% occupancy, according to Bapak Yayat Hidayat of Human Resources. After doing observations and interviews with the hotel employees the writer notices the shift of work motivation that causes job dissatisfaction during this pandemic. The incentive systems that are currently being implemented are mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1: Incentive System At V Hotel & Residence Bandung During Covid-19 Pandemic

Incentive System During Pandemic		
No	Incentive	Mechanism
1	Payment	Only 25% from total salary is the new take-home pay
2	Work Schedule	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2 weeks of unpaid leave in 1 month</li> <li>2. 2 weeks in-charge, 2 weeks off</li> <li>3. Monday-Wednesday in-charge</li> <li>4. Thursday-Sunday off day</li> <li>5. To cover operational cost</li> </ol>
3	Total Employee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Total active staff: 40</li> <li>2. PHK (Pemutusan Hubungan Kerja) staff: 30</li> <li>3. Total staff: 70</li> </ol>
4	Motivational Words	Supporting morally via social media (Whatsapp, etc.)
5	Efficiency and Multitasking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Department sections helping each other to keep operational running</li> <li>2. Sales employee helping front office employee</li> <li>3. Human resources employee helping food and beverage employee</li> </ol>

Source: Human Resource Manager, V Hotel & Residence Bandung, 2020

Based on table 1 shows that employee payments are 25% from their initial salary, work schedules have been adjusted to 2 weeks in-charge and 2 weeks unpaid leaves, and a total of 30 out of 70 employees have been work terminated or in Bahasa Indonesia: PHK (Pemutusan Hubungan Kerja), all of which to cover operational cost. Other than that, as stated by Yayat Hidayat as HR manager, motivational words are constantly shared between employees, supporting each other through social media and cross-departmental work is implemented.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Work Motivation in Hospitality Industry**

Good work motivation needs maintenance, maintenance is intended to maintain employee attitudes in doing work so that they continue to work for the progress and development of the hotel. If the maintenance of employees is not paid attention to, morale, attitude and employee loyalty will decrease. So that employees are enthusiastic about work, have high discipline, and be loyal in supporting company goals, the maintenance function gets the attention of managers (Hasibuan, 2014). To maintain work motivation, organizations must know what driving factors trigger employees so that they are motivated to do work so that they can be used as references to turn on or activate the motivating factors of employee motivation so that they can work diligently to achieve company goals and their own goals survive in all conditions and be able to work continuously for the betterment of the hotel.

Work motivation is vital for the accomplishment of personal and organizational goals (Zareen, Razzaq & Mujtaba, 2015). Work motivation represents a set of energizing forces which initiate work-related behavior and determine its form, duration, direction and intensity (Deschamps, Rinfret, Lagacé & Privé., 2016). Intrinsically motivated behavior is primarily driven by interest or inherent satisfaction or pleasure in some activity. Extrinsic motivation is a drive to act or behave in a certain way for the purpose of attaining or experiencing some external consequence. “Extrinsic” is, however, not a single quality of motivation because it can be divided into four sub-types of differing regulatory styles (external, introjected, identified and integrated regulations) (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

### **2.2 Herzberg Two Factor Theory**

Herzberg’s influential need theory of the 1960’s, the Two-Factor Theory, suggests that humans have two different sets of needs and that the different elements of the work situation satisfied or dissatisfied these needs (Wright, 1989). The first set concerns the basic survival needs of a person – the hygiene factors (Herzberg, 1971; Herzberg, Mausner, & Bloch Snyderman, 2005). These factors are not directly related to the job itself, but concern the conditions that surround performing that job. The factors are company policy such as for example reward system, salary, and interpersonal relations (Herzberg, 1971; Herzberg et al., 2005; Tietjen & Myers, 1998). According to Herzberg, these factors can cause dissatisfaction when not satisfied. However, when satisfied

these factors do not motivate or cause satisfaction, they only prevent dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1971; Herzberg et al., 2005).

The second set of needs is growth needs, which refers to factors intrinsic within the work itself, for example recognition of a task completed, achievement, responsibility, advancement and work itself. These factors are according to Herzberg, the motivating factors, which implies that humans try to become all that they are capable of becoming and when satisfied they work as motivators (Herzberg, 1971, Herzberg et al., 2005). According to Herzberg, content of work, (e.g. opportunities for responsibility and advancement) is the only way to increase satisfaction and thereby enhance work motivation (Wright, 1989). However, when the growth factors are missing this does not cause dissatisfaction, simply an absence of satisfaction (Herzberg, 1971; Herzberg et al., 2005).

Frederick Herzberg's "Two-Factor Theory" stated 2 indications that affect a person's work motivation: the satisfiers/motivators and the dissatisfiers/hygiene. As mentioned by Hanggraeni (2011) "Frederick Herzberg stated that a person's work motivation is strongly influenced by two groups of situations, namely situations that provide job satisfaction (satisfiers / motivators) and situations that do not provide job satisfaction (dissatisfiers / hygiene)". Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has also been applied context-adapted in studies of the hospitality industry. One example is the essence of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of work motivation, as understood in this study, is that work motivation is grounded in the satisfaction of 'higher' needs or 'self-fulfilment needs' (Pinder, 1998).

### **2.3 Relationship of Work Motivation and Covid-19**

In connection with the Covid-19 that hit almost the whole world and especially the hotel industry, employee work motivation is very much needed because it will affect the performance of the employees themselves to the performance of the hotel. As explained that work motivation is measured by two factors, namely hygiene and motivator where with this application in a company it will be very helpful to survive in any situation and condition at work, namely the basic survival needs of a person is the hygiene factors and The second set of needs is growth needs, which refers to factors intrinsic within the work itself, for example, recognition of a task completed, achievement, responsibility, advancement and work itself i.e. motivator factors (Herzberg, 1971; Herzberg et al, 2005).

## **3 Methodology**

### **3.1 Design and Participants**

The type of research method that the writer uses to complete this project is descriptive. The techniques used to collect data are: Questionnaires, Interviews, Library Research. Data analysis is used to get the meaning of each number obtained through statistical calculations. Data analysis techniques in this study include finding the average

value (mean) and likert scale. Determination of the sample in this study, the authors use the entire population or called total sampling because the number of employees at this hotel is not more than 50 people, namely as many as 40 employees from all hotel departments.

### 3.2 Instruments

This research instrument uses a questionnaire or questionnaire regarding employee motivation to work during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2: Matrix of Operational Variables of Employee Work Motivation

Variable	Sub Variable	Indicator	Number of Item	Item Number
Work Motivation	Motivator Factor	Recognition	2	1,2
		Advancement	4	3,4,5,6
		Achievement	2	7,8
		Possibility of Growth	3	9,10,11
		The Work Itself	3	12,13,14
	Hygiene Factor	Technical Supervision	4	15,16,17,18
		Working Condition	4	19,20,21,22
		Company Policies & Administration	4	23,24,25,26
		Interpersonal Relationship	3	27,28,29
		Total		29

Source: Herzberg, F. in Hasibuan, 2014

## 4 Findings

The results of the data obtained as a whole from the items representing each sub-indicator are as follows:

Table 3: Results Of Employee’s Perception Towards the Motivator Factor

No	Element	Score	Criteria
1	Recognition	175	Very Good
2	Advancement	169	Very Good
3	Achievement	162	Good
4	Possibility of Growth	153.6	Good
5	The Work Itself	172.3	Very Good

Total	166.4	Good
-------	-------	------

Source: Author's Data Processing, 2020

The author makes a scale range or interval limit as follows:

- Highest value x Total number of respondents:  $5 \times 40 = 200$
- Lowest value x Total number of respondents :  $1 \times 40 = 40$
- Range (R) :  $200 - 40 = 160$
- Scale range (I) : 32

Based on the above calculation, the interval scale is obtained as follows:

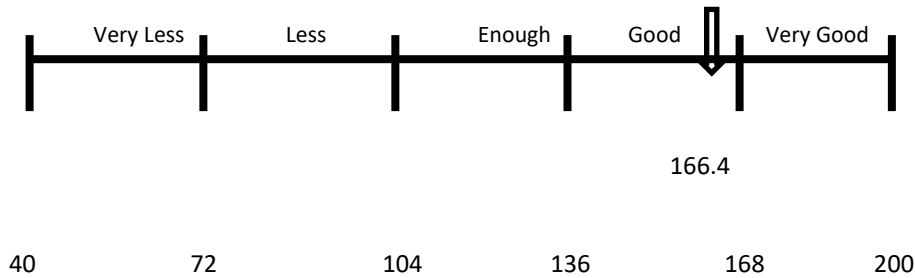


Figure 1: Continuum Line of Motivator Factor

Source: Author's Data Processing, 2020

Table 4: Results Of Employee's Perception Towards the Hygiene Factor

No	Element	Score	Criteria
1	Technical Supervision	164.25	Good
2	Working Condition	160.5	Good
3	Company Policies & Administration	151.75	Good
4	Interpersonal Relationship	178.33	Very Good
	Total	163.70	Good

Source: Author's Data Processing, 2020

The author makes a scale range or interval limit as follows:

- Highest value x Total number of respondents:  $5 \times 40 = 200$
- Lowest value x Total number of respondents:  $1 \times 40 = 40$
- Range (R) :  $200 - 40 = 160$
- Scale Range (I) : 32

Based on the above calculation, the interval scale is obtained as follows:

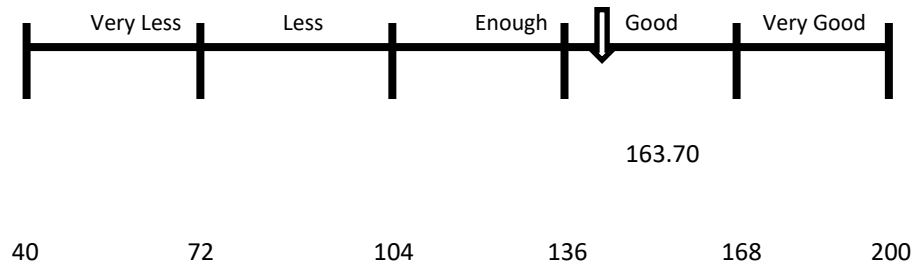


Figure 2: Continuum Line of Hygiene Factor  
Source: Author's Data Processing, 2020

## 5 Discussion

Basically, the main objectives of this research were to explore (1) To perceive the Motivator Factor of the employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, (2) To perceive the Hygiene Factor of the employees during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the research findings support the proposed framework and show that employee responses, both motivator factors, and hygiene factors, are both good and employees feel motivated by hotel management so that they have work spirit and job satisfaction during a crisis like now. The findings support Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and show that it still has validity. The essence of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of work motivation, as understood in this study, is that work motivation is grounded in the satisfaction of 'higher' needs or 'self-fulfilments needs' (Pinder, 1998).

The findings show that, related to the motivator factor, it can be said to be good because of all the indicators it shows a good response. As the perceptions of employees towards Recognition, Advancement and the Work Itself are perceived very well due to the high scoring. This means V Hotel & Residence Bandung have done their best to deliver the motivator factors to their employees in order to increase the work motivation. The perception towards Achievement and the Possibility of Growth are perceived a bit lower than the rest of the aspects, however still in the "Good" criteria. For these 2 aspects V Hotel & Residence Bandung have done their best to deliver them to their employees, however not as well as the other aspects. This may occur due to the decrease of employees currently at work, resulting in less training sessions as a whole for staff personal development. This study shows results that are relevant and following the theory or results of Herzberg's research which states that motivator factors affect job satisfaction so that even during a pandemic, hotel employees can still survive in a situation where many policies related to operations and staffing have changed. This shows that the employees' perception towards the Motivator Factor perceived well enough that it maintains their motivation to work during this pandemic.

Related to the hygiene factor, it can be said to be good because of all the indicators it shows a good response. As the interpersonal relationship at V Hotel & Residence Bandung is perceived with the highest score in the hygiene factor. This means the



perception towards the relationship between colleagues and management is the aspect that affects the employees most to stay motivated at work. The technical supervision and working conditions were both perceived as “Good” by the employees. This occurs due to some points that need more attention, such as: working equipment and leaders making fair decisions. The lack of attention in these points affect how employees perceive the Hygiene factors and therefore also affect their motivation to work. The aspect perceived the lowest by employees is the company policies and administration. This is the effect of the pandemic situation currently, workers are being sent home and payment has also been deducted. However, employee payment was not discussed by the writer as it is a sensitive subject and the rights of privacy of every employee. From the reasoning mentioned by the writer previously, this affects how employees perceive this Hygiene factor and therefore affects the work motivation. This means that the Hygiene Factors are perceived well enough that employees are satisfied and therefore, affecting their work motivation to be high even during this pandemic. This situation is also in line with research that shows that there is a significant influence of hygiene variables on job satisfaction (Garcia-Bernal, Gargallo-Castel, Marzo-Navarro & Rivera-Torres, 2005). The satisfaction that employees derive can be strengthened by focusing on Herzberg’s motivators while employee dissatisfaction could be prevented by addressing hygiene factors.

## **6 Conclusion & Recommendations**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

After going through observations and analysing the problems the writer conveyed in the previous chapter, in this last chapter the writer will draw conclusions and recommendations regarding to what extent do the incentive policies of V Hotel & Residence Bandung match the employees’ expectations on their work motivation. The writer concludes that work motivation is about how the employees perceive the Motivator Factors applied at V Hotel & Residence Bandung. Overall, the employees’ perception on the Motivator Factors are most “Good” and “Very Good”, both scoring relatively high in values. The conclusions are based on the following aspects: recognition, advancement, achievement, the possibility of growth and the work itself. As a whole the perception of employees on the Motivator Factor are fulfilled good enough that it still motivates the workers to continue their work. However, even if the score is “Good” there is still a possibility to improve this factor in order to increase work motivation of employees. In addition, the work motivation also regards how employees perceive the Hygiene Factors applied at V Hotel & Residence Bandung. The aspects being perceived are the technical supervision, the working condition, company policies and administration and finally, the interpersonal relationship. Overall, the Hygiene Factor also results in an average in the “Good” criteria which means the perception of employees towards this factor is still relatively high. However, there can still be attempts to improve this in order to increase the work motivation of employees to become “Really Good”.

## 6.2 Recommendation

From the conclusions derived through the processed questionnaires and assessment in the previous chapter, the writer will try to provide recommendations, considerations and inputs on the perception applied at V Hotel & Residence Bandung. With the hopes of the writer that these recommendations can be used to enhance employees' perception delivered by management, affecting their motivation to work and increasing their work performance as a whole.

1. The writer suggests for V Hotel & Residence Bandung management to pay more attention to the Motivator Factors, such as: Giving more frequent training sessions to enhance the personal development of employees. By giving more frequent training sessions, employees can explore the sections/department they wish to expand their knowledge, with the hopes to increasing the possibility for growth
2. Moreover, below are the writers' suggestions for management to focus on in the Hygiene Factors, such as: a) Renewing or replenishing old or used equipment, especially for operational purposes, to enhance work productivity. This will affect the motivation of employees to work more efficiently because the equipment they utilize is in good condition; and b) With the hopes of the situation improving, to re-hire the employees that were sent home. Interpersonal relationships can be increased, and employees perceive that the company policies and administration are still attempting to raise the work motivation of employees by doing so.

## Acknowledgement

We would like to thank the human resource directors in hotels for circulating our questionnaire. We are also grateful to our respondent hotels' employees' for participating in the study.

## 7 References

- Azevêdo, R. (2020). Global trade will be vital to economic recovery from covid-19. Retrieved from [www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/08/global-trade-will-be-vital-to-the-economic-recovery-from-covid-19](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/08/global-trade-will-be-vital-to-the-economic-recovery-from-covid-19) (accessed 14 Desember 2020).
- CDC. (2020). Coronavirus disease 2019. Retrieved from [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covidspreads.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-covidspreads.html) (accessed 14 December 2020)
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104\\_01](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01)
- Deschamps, C., Rinfret, N., Lagacé, M. C., & Privé, C. (2016). Transformational leadership and change: How leaders influence their followers' motivation through organizational justice. *Journal of Healthcare Management*, 61(3), 194–213. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00115514-201605000-00007>

- Fadila, Dewi & Ridho, Sari Lestari Zainal. 2013. *Perilaku Konsumen*. Palembang: Penerbit Citrabooks Indonesia.
- Garcia-Bernal, J., Gargallo-Castel, A., Marzo-Navarro, M. and Rivera-Torres, Pilar. (2005). Job satisfaction: empirical evidence of gender differences. *Women in Management Review*, 20(4): 279-288.
- Hanggraeni, D. (2011). *Perilaku Organisasi*. Jakarta: Lembaga Penerbit Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Indonesia.
- Hasibuan, H. M. (2014). *Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia*. Edisi Kedua. Yogyakarta: PT. BPF.
- Hasibuan, H. M. (2014). *Manajemen: Dasar, Pengertian, dan Masalah*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Herzberg, F. (1971). *Work and the nature of man*. New York: World Publishing.
- Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Bloch Snyderman, B. (2005). *The motivation to work*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- Pratama, M. R. (2015). Pengaruh Insentif Terhadap Motivasi Kerja. Vol. 5. *Jurnal Administrasi Bisnis (JAB)*.
- Pinder, C. C. (1998). *Work motivation in organizational behaviour*. USA: Prentice Hall.
- Surnamie. 2016. Pengaruh Pemberian Insentif Dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Kerja Karyawan Perusahaan Jasa Pos. Vol. 2 Nomor 3. *Al-Ulum Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*
- Tietjen, M. A., & Myers, R. M. (1998). Motivation and job satisfaction. *Management Decision*, 36(4), 226–231.
- Wright, P. (1989). Motivation and job satisfaction. *Human resource management*. Lund, Sweden: Studentlitteratur.
- Zareen, M., Razzaq, K., & Mujtaba, B. G. (2015). Impact of Transactional, Transformational and Laissez-Faire Leadership Styles on Motivation: A Quantitative Study of Banking Employees in Pakistan. *Public Organization Review*, 15(4), 531–549. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11115-014-0287-6>