A Study on The Importance of Motivation among The Managers in Medan’s Construction Companies

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Abstract—Managers as the key employees in determining the success of the project and the construction company have a very important role in maintaining the workforce performance which is critical to the construction companies’ success in the future. If motivated employees were started with motivated managers probably demotivated ones were started with demotivated managers. This study aimed to analyze the importance of motivated managers to their successes and construction companies’ successes. In this study quantitative method was used and the field work study was conducted in Medan, North Sumatera. Questionnaire survey was distributed directly to construction companies in Medan, North Sumatera which are listed in the Construction Services Development Board. A total of 60 managers responded and the completed questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive analysis. The results indicated that motivation among managers is very important to project success and construction companies’ successes to maintain workforces to be motivated and well performed.

S Keywords—construction company, managers, motivation

I. INTRODUCTION

SUCCESSFUL managers require sophisticated and organizational skills as well as the effectiveness to manage the multidisciplinary activities which requires the ability to understand the organizational and behavioral elements in order to create the work environment that suits for the team’s motivational needs and lead effectively in a project through its multifunctional phases (Thamhain, 1993). In construction industries which often have unstructured work environments, managers are faced with many challenges internally and externally.
Internally, managers must be able to deal with a variety of interfaces and support their workforce. Externally, they must be kept up to date following the changes regarding markets, regulations, technology and other socioeconomic factors. Whether as the project manager, the general managers, the technical managers, and as the director of marketing, these managers are people and also employees, no less than the workers and administration staff or those who work on the construction site. Since these managers are all people, they will perform their best when they are motivated to give of their best (Whiteley, 2002). As all the projects run by people, it is risky for the construction companies to have demotivated employees, but it will be more risky for the construction companies to have demotivated managers because they are key employees who are responsible for maintaining the project team performance as well as controlling the project itself, which are very critical to the construction company.

This paper is focused on the idea “the importance of motivation among the successful managers in the construction company” as the basic topic. The respondents that were surveyed were the managers who work in 29 large construction companies which are located in Medan, Indonesia that are registered under the Construction Services Development Board.

II. MANAGERS AND MOTIVATION

The term of motivation is derived from the Latin language 'movere', in the present context motivation is the psychological processes to ask for direction, giving direction, and enhancing the behavior to do something in order to achieve goals (Mitchell, 1982). Motivation is concerned with why people act or do things they do or why they refrain from doing things they do not want to do. In other words, motivation can be defined as all the factors that caused people’s behavior (Stoner, 1995). Motivation can also be influenced by other people who know how to control the attempts to satisfy the needs and how to direct needs or wants (Dewi, 2006). According to Phillip (2002) motivation is having the encouragement to do something and determines why, whether, and how we work.

Being able to motivate others is the most important of management tasks, because to motivate others requires the abilities that the managers should possess such as performing good communication, to encourage others, obtaining feedback, being able to involve and to delegate the tasks, developing and training, providing a reward, and being able to brief and inform (Denny, 2002). According to Norman Scarborough (2003) motivation is the degree of the employee’s efforts to fulfill the job and it shows the excitement to work. To motivate workers to perform their best in their work is one of the most challenging and difficult tasks. Norman Scarborough (2003) divided the factors that motivate the workers as four aspect of motivation, and they are: empowerment, job design, rewards and compensation, and feedback. Therefore in an organization, motivation can be seen as related to two different, but related ideas: the individual’s point of view and the organization or manager’s stand point. Individuals see motivation as an internal state or driving forces within a person due to unfulfilled needs that will make the person choose between alternative forms of actions in order to achieve desired goals. Goals may be tangible, such as higher pay, bonus and benefits or intangible rewards such as reputation, respect, recognition or achievement (Phillip, 2002). Fig. 1 below summarizes the individual’s view of motivation: Unfulfilled Needs Assessing the Unfulfilled Needs Search Behavior Rewards (Reduction of tension) Satisfaction of Needs Ability Skill Experience Fig. 1 The Motivation Process (Mathis, 2001) Behavior to Fulfill Needs Achievement Evaluation Fig. 1 illustrates the motivational process that occurs in our everyday lives. Needs, especially those unfulfilled ones are
drives or forces that will initiate certain behavior in individuals. The unfulfilled needs often create tension in individuals. On the other hand, manager views motivation as the expenditure of effort to accomplish results (Whiteley, 2002). The efforts are forces to perform. In a company or organization, it comes from three groups of people: the individual, the manager and the group of people or the employees. Therefore, individuals and manager view motivation differently. One of the motivation models under the need or content theory is the Theory X and Theory Y, which was developed by Douglas McGregor. This theory describes the views or perception of managers with regard to their employees. The Theory X managers have a traditional or a pessimistic view of motivation with regard to employees. Thus, these managers, in order to make sure that their employees do their work, have to apply the autocratic style of leadership where the employees have to be constantly directed and controlled. Managers of Theory X view the employees in terms of the following characteristics: inherently disliking work, prefer to avoid work and to be pushed to work, has no ambition, irresponsible, unable to cope with changes, feeling that work is of secondary importance, and having no leadership (Vroom & Deci, 1974). On the other hand, Theory Y managers, view their employees in terms of the following characteristics: willing to work; work is as natural as play or rest, willing to accept responsibility since work brings satisfaction, capable of directing themselves (self-direction), capable of self-control, frequently using imagination, ingenuity and creativity in accomplishing tasks (Pinder, 1984). It can be concluded that managers in theory X are pessimistic, while managers in theory Y are optimistic. Therefore, managers must try to shift their attention from theory X to theory Y. This is because assumptions that people are lazy, dislike work and need to be coerced and controlled are sometimes not true. Sometimes, individuals’ potentials are not realized. Therefore, to tap the potential and to ensure high work performance, managers should assume the role of Theory Y managers and try to improve their employees' and groups' performance by providing a climate that will give the people opportunities to develop themselves. Because both people and task should be taken into consideration simultaneously in order to achieve efficacy and effectiveness. A successful manager much or less is related to his success in running a project exactly to cost, time, and quality and able to perform well as a leader who is able to motivate his team. To understand that motivation is important to the success of a manager in leading his or her team, below is a brief explanation to have general information on how a motivated manager as a leader to his team will have certain influence to the follower performance. The Leader Environment-Follower Interaction (LEFI) theory sees the performance of the follower more broadly. In this theory the follower performance is seen as a function of the individual’s motivation, ability, role perception, and environmental constraints (Vroom & Deci, 1974). In this theory the motivational force is determined by the task goal whether it is the level, the specificity, and the commitment of the task goal, energy potential, and perceived effort requirement as can be seen in fig. 2. House in 1971 analyzed the effects of leadership behavior dimensions on follower motivation using the expectancy model as a foundation. The Path-Goal theory of House (1971) can be seen as the most appropriate perspective to assess the leader effectiveness in terms of the leader’s influence to the follower’s performance. Related to the leader’s impact upon the follower motivation. The LEFI theory uses an expansion of the goal theory of motivation, and the Path Goal theory uses the expectancy theory of motivation. Leader Behaviour.
Follower Performance Variables Ability Need Analysis Selection & Placement Transfer & Training 1 2 Intelligence Aptitude Achievement Ability

Motivation & Deficiency Analysis Difficult Goals 2 Specific Goals Goals Commitment Energy Facilitation Establishing High Perceived

Effort Requirement 1 2 Task 1 Goal Level Task Goal Specificity Task Goal Commitment Energy Potential Perceived Effort

Requirement Motivation Follower Performance Role Perception Need Analysis Role Clarification Role Gather Reduction Role

Effectiveness Increase Accurate Role Perception 1 2 2 Role Ambiguity Role Conflict Role Effectiveness & Accuracy Role

Perception Environmental Need Analysis Provision of Technology 2 Provision of Resources Establishing Social Support

Establishing Structures 1 2 Physical Resources Technology Material & Financial Resources Social Support Group Structure

Organizational Structure Constraints of the Environment 1 2 Leader Need or Deficiency Analysis 2 Leader Action to

Alleviate Deficiency Feedback Leader Traits Environmental Influences Determinant Fig. 2 2 The Leader Environment –

Follower Interaction Model of Leadership (Wofford, 1979) Both of the LEFI 1 theory and the Path Goal theory are Fig. 2

Illustrates the manager or leader motivation is one of the manager’s behaviors that will influence the follower performance. This means that the follower motivation depends on the motivation of the manager himself. So it is very important to have a motivated manager who is able to create a workplace that suits the follower motivation so that they can be self-motivated. Therefore, the manager must look at the environment and make sure that it is one in which the manager himself or herself can be motivated. And as a leader for a team, a manager should consider the right environment for his or her people to be motivated (Williams, 1995). Nevertheless motivation, whether seen from the individual’s or the organization’s point of view addresses the same issue: that is, achieving goals individual or organization. These goals can only be achieved through the cooperation between people and organization. People need organization to achieve their goals and organization needs people to achieve its goals. An organization through its managers should take care of its employees by practicing good motivation and leadership styles. Good motivation practices will lead to effective and efficient organization and some good motivation practices are: the managers should be sensitive to the differences in needs and values among the people that are supervised, increase the employees’ expectations so that their efforts will lead to effective performance, and encourage the subordinates to set performance goals that are specific, challenging and attainable (Denny, 2002). These are all very important to determine the success of the company, managers who know how to motivate the employees will give a good contribution to the company. Therefore, a successful manager in the construction company much or less is related to his success to run a project exactly to cost, time, with a good quality and able to perform well as a leader who is able to motivate his team. III. METHODOLOGY The research is conducted by using a quantitative method and providing questionnaires as the main source of getting the primary data. The questionnaire was developed into four major parts, the first part consists of nine questions which highlight the respondent’s background, the second part consists of five questions aiming to find out the background of the company, the third part of questionnaire aims to get the information on how important the motivated manager for the construction company’s success and to get the managers perception on motivation, this third part is using the Likert Scale to test how strong the agreement of the respondents to each of the statements given. Each of the phases in Likert scale is: 1 (Strongly disagree), 2 (Not agree), 3 (Neutral), 4 (Agree), 5 (Strongly
the last part is the comment of respondents for the purpose of finding out more opinion from the managers on motivation. IV.

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS The questionnaires were distributed to the construction companies in Medan under B classification. Construction companies under B classification were chosen because they can be categorized as stable companies which have many experiences in the construction industry as well as their managers as their key employees who were successful in leading their workers to perform their best. From 60 respondents, 21 respondents (35%) were general managers, 16 respondents (26.7%) of them were project managers, 12 respondents (20%) of them were technical managers, and 11 respondents (18.3%) were marketing and financial managers. Since construction companies which were located in Medan mostly were branch offices usually there were only two to three managers for each of the companies and the project managers usually will be appointed or selected from the main offices in Jakarta if there were projects in North Sumatera, Aceh or Nias. Mostly of the respondents had 6-10 years of experience in the construction industry (21 respondents, 35%), 16 respondents (26.7%) of them had 11-15 years of experience, 14 respondents (23.3%) had 16-20 years of experience, and 3 respondents (5%) out of them 3 had more than 20 years of experience in construction industry. Most of the respondents were at the age between 30-39 years old 31 (51.7%), 19 respondents (31.7%) were between 40-49 years old, 5 respondents (8.3%) were between 50-59 years old, 4 respondents (6.7%) were between 25-29 years old and 1 respondent (1.7%) were more than 60 years old. 55 (91.7%) respondents were Bachelors, 3 respondents (5%) were Masters, and 2 respondents (3.3%) had Diploma degrees. Mostly the age of the construction companies where the respondents worked were more than 10 years (25 companies, 89%), and 3 construction companies (10.7%) were established between 5-10 years. This showed that mostly the companies classified in B (Big) classification were established more than five years. 22 construction companies (78.6%) were local private companies and 6 (21.4%) were BUMN (Badan Usaha Milik Negara) or construction companies owned by government. The companies’ average project value per year were mostly 10-50 billion rupiah (13 companies, 46.4%), 10 (35.7%) of them had average project value per year of more than 50 billion rupiah, and 5 companies (17.9%) had less than 10 billion rupiah. The third part questions were related to motivated managers and their responsibility to create a happy workplace in which the employees are self motivated so that the construction companies where they worked for achieved the goals and succeed, which started with a motivated manager. This part also aimed to get supported agreement from the respondents on how important to identify what motivational factors drove the managers in construction companies to work. Most of the respondents were agree that motivation influenced their works’ performances (44 respondents, 73.3%), and 16 respondents (26.7%) were strongly agree about the statement. This showed that there were positive feed back from all of the respondents, as can be seen in Table I. TABLE I MOTIVATION INFLUENCES YOUR WORK PERFORMANCE Number of Question 1 Percentage (%) Respondents agree 44 73.3 strongly agree 16 26.7 Total 60 100 TABLE II HIGH MOTIVATED EMPLOYEE WILL INFLUENCE THE COMPANY’S SUCCESS Number of Question 2 Percentage (%) Respondents agree 38 63.3 strongly agree 22 36.7 Total 60 100 From Table II can be seen that 33 respondents (63.3%) were agree to the statement on high motivated employee will influence the construction company’s success, and 22 respondents (36.7%) were strongly agree to the statement. TABLE III A MOTIVATED EMPLOYEE WILL WORK HARDER IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE GOALS RATHER THAN A DEMOTIVATED EMPLOYEE Question 3 Number of Respondents Percentage (%) agree 24 40 strongly agree 36 60 Total 60 100 The statement of a motivated employee will work harder in order to achieve goals rather than demotivated one had strongly agreement from the respondents (36 respondents, 60%), and 24 respondents (40%) were agree to the statement. TABLE IV MANAGERS HAVE IMPORTANT ROLE IN MOTIVATING THE EMPLOYEES Question 4 Number of Respondents Percentage (%) agree 9 15 strongly agree 51 85 Total 60 100 In Table IV, the statement that managers have important role in motivating the employees got 51 respondents over 60 (85%) were strongly agree and the rest 9 respondents (15%) were agree to the statement. TABLE V CREATING A CONducIVE WORKPLACE IN WHICH EMPLOYEES ARE SELF MOTIVATED IS MANAGERS’ RESPONSIBILITY Number of Question 5 Percentage (%) Respondents neutral 1 1.7 agree 37 61.7 strongly agree 22 36.7 Total 60 100 The statement that creating a conducive workplace in which employees are self motivated is manager’s responsibility got feed back
from 60 respondents, 37 respondents (61.7%) were agree to the statement, 22 out of them (36.7%) were strongly agree to the statement, and only 1 respondent (1.7%) were neutral as can be seen in Table V. TABLE VI IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY TO HAVE
MOTIVATED MANAGERS IN ORDER TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE OVER THE LONG RUN Number of Question 6 Percentage (%) Respondents
agree 2 3.3 strongly agree 58 96.7 Total 60 100 In Table VI, The statement of it is very important to have a motivated manager in the construction company got strongly agreement from 58 respondents (96.7%) and 2 respondents (3.3%) were agree to the statement. TABLE VII MANAGERS ARE
THE KEY EMPLOYEES IN DETERMINING THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY'S SUCCESS Question 7 Number of Respondents Percentage (%)
agree 19 31.7 strongly agree 41 68.3 Total 60 100 The statement that managers are the key employees in determining the construction company’s success in Table VII got feed back from 60 respondents, 41 respondents (68.3%) were strongly agree to the statement, and 19 out of 60 respondents (31.7%) were agree to the statement. TABLE VIII IT IS IMPORTANT TO IDENTIFY MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS THAT SERVE AS DRIVERS FOR
THE MANAGERS IN CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES TO WORK Number of Question 8 Percentage (%) Respondents agree 12 20 strongly agree 48 80 Total 60 100 From Table VIII above the statement of it is important to identify motivational factors that serve as drivers for the managers in the construction companies to work got strongly agreement from 48 respondents (80%) and 12 respondents (20%) out of 60 respondents were agree to the statement. From this study, the managers were mostly strongly agree to the statements that motivation influenced their work performance and their successes, high motivated employees influenced the company's success, a motivated employee worked harder than demotivated one, and it was important to have a motivated manager in the construction company. The respondents were also strongly agree that managers were the key employees in determining the construction company’s success and had important role in motivating the workers but when it came to the responsibility of the managers most of them were agree to the statement that creating a conducive workplace in which employees were self motivated was manager’s responsibility and only 22 respondents out of 60 (36.7%) were strongly agree to the statement, even there was 1 respondent (1.7%) chose neutral to the statement. ACKNOWLEDGMENT F. A would like to acknowledge Universiti Sains Malaysia for making this publication possible.
REFERENCES V. CONCLUSION The findings on this research explain that the successful managers in Medan’s construction companies see motivation as a very important thing that influences their work performance. When the managers are motivated to achieve organization’s goals, they will influence and lead the construction company to success. There are certain qualifications in which a manager should have to be succeeded and one of them is the ability to motivate the workforces. Managers need to understand more on this psychological process if they want to be the successful persons to guide their workers in achieving the organizations’ goals or targets. Therefore, to be effective in handling their project team or their subordinates, managers should have an understanding of motivational forces as well as taking seriously the responsibility to create a happy work environment for the employees. More importantly in the construction industry where the ability to build the project team, motivate others, create organizational structures and a happy workplace environment to the workers’ motivational needs are required to make successful project management. However, it can be concluded that there were positive responses from the managers in Medan’s construction companies on the importance of motivation in their work performance. But, we should not forget that the managers in the construction companies are also employees that need to be understood and whose motivation is of equal importance so that these key employees can perform their best in fulfilling their tasks as well as leading their workers. Therefore, for further studies it will be interesting to conduct a study on factors that serve as the drivers for the managers in construction companies, and to see the comparison between the managers who work in construction industry and the managers in other industry if they were given the same list of motivational factors to be contemplated.