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Marketing Research of Personnel Motivation and Pharmacy Chains

Investigación de mercado de la motivación del personal y cadenas de farmacias

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RESUMEN

El propósito del estudio es analizar la motivación de los empleados de farmacias y cadenas de farmacias para identificar áreas problemáticas y desarrollar instrucciones mejorando el sistema de gestión empresarial. Como resultado del estudio, se descubrió que la motivación es una de las principales condiciones para el trabajo eficaz de una organización farmacéutica, mientras que los componentes más importantes del sistema de motivación para los empleados son factores externos positivos como la Motivación financiera. Con base en los resultados del estudio, se han desarrollado recomendaciones para mejorar la construcción del sistema de motivación.

Palabras clave: Farmacia, cadena de farmacias, sistema de motivación

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to analyze the motivation of pharmacy and pharmacy chain employees to identify problem areas and develop instructions to improve the business management system. As a result of the study, motivation was found to be one of the main conditions for the effective work of a pharmaceutical organization, while the most important components of the employee motivation system are positive external factors such as financial motivation. Based on the results of the study, recommendations have been developed to improve the construction of the motivation system.

Keywords: Pharmacy, pharmacy chain, motivation system.

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INTRODUCTION

The increasing competition of pharmacy chains, as well as individual pharmacies, in the federal and regional pharmaceutical markets of Russia necessitates obtaining objective information about the management system of these organizations to highlight their strengths and weaknesses, find new development opportunities and reduce operating costs. It is necessary to proceed from the fact that the strategic development of any enterprise, including those represented in the pharmaceutical industry, in modern conditions is inevitably associated with the development of an effective program of employee motivation and its continuous improvement, based on the changing conditions of the internal and external environment.

The relevance and importance of studying the existing motivation system for employees of pharmaceutical organizations is confirmed by the results of sociological studies. Thus, according to the results of the study by specialists of the Znanie (Knowledge) Pharmaceutical Center, after interviewing employees of pharmacy chains from various constituent entities of the Russian Federation, it was found that 13% of pharmacists were not satisfied with their remuneration, and 41% of respondents did not consider their work prestigious, which demotivated their activities (Pharm Znanie: 2019).

This is happening because in the near future legislative amendments can be adopted in Russia aimed at enabling trade organizations to sell over-the-counter medicines, which 87% of the surveyed employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains are not happy with (Pharm Znanie: 2018).

This situation will lead to increased competition in the pharmaceutical sales market, which will lead to a reduction of pharmacy organizations and low motivation of their employees. In these conditions, to increase competitiveness, the leadership of pharmacy organizations needs to not only retain the most qualified employees, additionally motivating them, but also improve the existing staff motivation system to ensure a high level of sales and profitability.

Today, the issues of building a motivation system for employees of pharmaceutical organizations have attracted the attention of foreign researchers from China, the USA, countries of Western Europe, the Middle East and Southeast Asia (Agomo: 2008; Al Khalidi, Wazaify: 2013; Al-Worafi: 2014; Chua et al.: 2014; McHugh: 1999; Schafheutle et al.: 2011). At the same time, in Russia, the study and analysis of building a motivation system for employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains are still extremely rare. One of the most interesting works in this direction is the study of Y. A. Cherezova and S. N. Halimanenko (2018).

The purpose of this study is to analyze the motivation of employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains to develop directions for improving the management system of a pharmaceutical organization.

METHODOLOGY

The survey method, in which 100 respondents participated, was used as the main method for studying motivating factors in the activities of employees of pharmaceutical organizations. The research section included pharmacists in pharmacies and pharmacy chains of Moscow, belonging to eight business entities of various forms of ownership. For the correct presentation of the results of a sociological study, the survey did not include representatives of the leadership of pharmaceutical organizations.

The selection was carried out by the deterministic quota method. The following parameters were considered as controlled parameters during the study: position (pharmacist), work experience in the specialty (at least 3 years). The field phase of the study was carried out in October-November 2019 using the method of personal oral interview using a structured survey. The survey included questions that dealt with individual characteristics of respondents, not including personal data (position, work experience, age), the assessment of their motivational needs for remuneration and the use of intangible incentives, as well as the analysis of the level of satisfaction of respondents with the organization's personnel motivation system.

RESULTS

The preliminary analysis of literary sources on the motivation of the organization's personnel (Bokovnya: 2017; Genkin: 2018; Rebrov: 2018) made it possible to divide all the motivating factors of employees of pharmaceutical organizations for research purposes into:

- 1) internal and external;
- 2) positive and negative;
- 3) financial and non-financial.

The following factors were attributed to factors that have a negative impact on an employee:

- disciplinary action;
- use of a system of fines;
- cancellation (reduction) of cash bonuses.

We attributed the following to internal motivating factors for employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains:

- interesting and motivating work;
- sense of pride in their work;
- possibility of obtaining new knowledge and skills;
- achievement of organizational (corporate) goals;
- fame of an organization and desire to work in it;
- attractiveness of the personality of a leader.

To the financial motivating factors affecting the financial condition of the employee we attributed the following:

- high salary;
- sales bonuses;
- bonuses and other financial incentives based on performance;
- payment for training and continuing education programs;
- packages of social benefits (additional medical insurance, payment for mobile communications, compensation of transportation costs, etc.);
- provision of additional benefits (free meals, delivery by corporate transport, etc.).

Non-financial motivating factors included:

- creating and maintaining a friendly corporate (intra-organizational) climate in the team;
- participation in management decisions in the organization;
- existence of feedback from subordinates with a leader and consideration of their wishes;
- moral encouragement, recognition and respect for the work of an employee;
- maintaining an attractive balance of the regime of work and rest, promotion of additional days off, etc.;
- rewarding the best employees with vacation packages, membership cards for visits to fitness clubs, tickets for concerts, etc.

The systematization of motivating factors for employees of pharmaceutical organizations is presented in Figure 1.

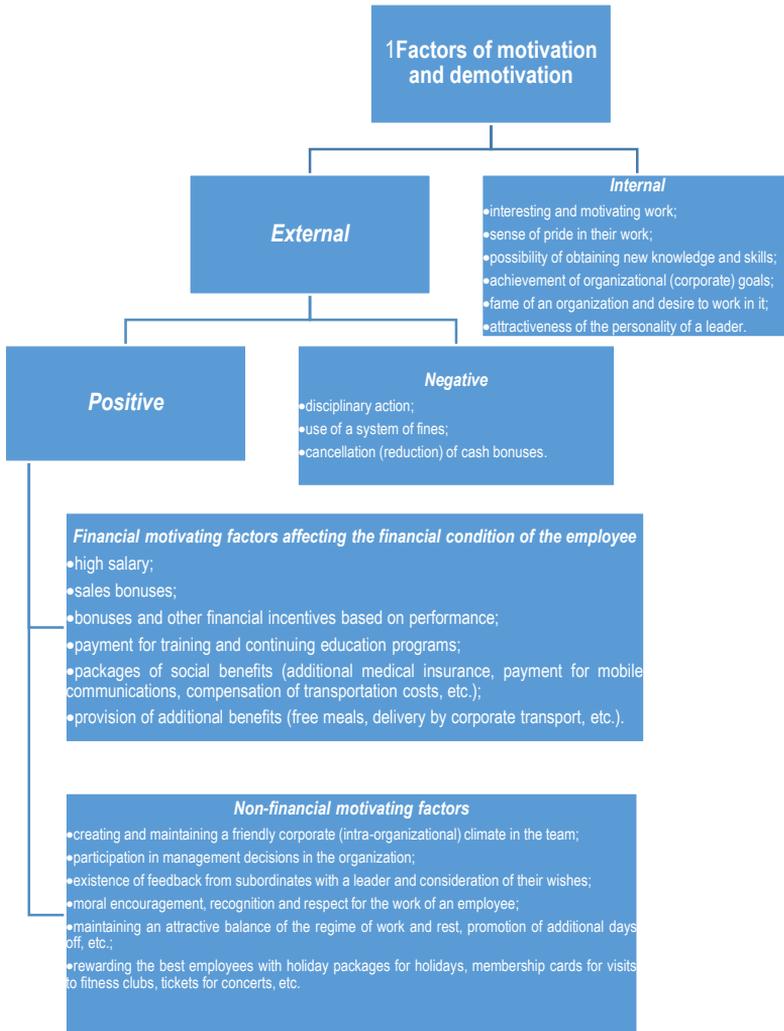


Figure 1. The systematization of motivating factors for employees of pharmaceutical organizations

It should be noted that the choice of these factors is relatively subjective and expresses exclusively our point of view, since in the scientific community, there are various approaches to the gradation of motivating factors, as well as the classification of individual factors as internal and external, financial or non-financial.

For example, such a factor as the attractiveness of the personality of a leader is not reflected in the content of the theory of motivation and is not considered by most researchers as a motivating factor. Nevertheless, we believe that this factor should be included in the study based on the approaches of B. Bass's transformational theory of leadership. Moreover, this factor should be attributed to internal motivation, because it does not imply external motivation, but an internal inspirational moral and psychological impact on an employee who is ready to support the actions of a leader even in a situation of worsening working conditions and labor activities.

Thus, the systematization carried out is not of a deep theoretical nature and was prepared solely to create the necessary basis for conducting experimental work.

The next stage of the study was the sociological survey conducted among employees of pharmacies and pharmaceutical organizations of Moscow, during which respondents could indicate several of the most important, in their opinion, motivating factors in their work. Its main results are presented in the form of a diagram in Figure 2.

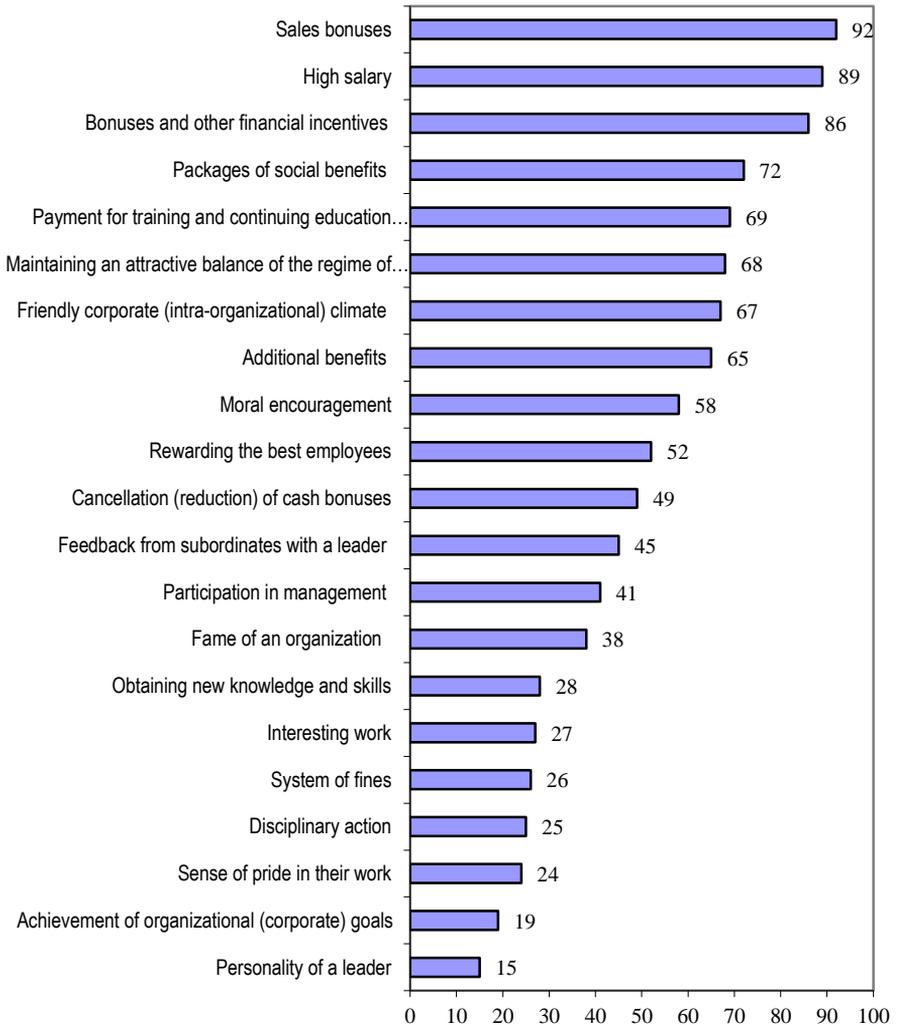


Figure 2. Distribution of motivating factors based on respondents' assessment of their impact on labor efficiency

We divided the factors and the results of the survey into four groups based on the respondents' assessment of the effectiveness of their use (Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of motivating factors according to the degree of their impact on employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains

Strong motivators (76-100% of respondents' answers)	Average motivators (51-75% of respondents' answers)	Moderate motivators (26-50% of respondents' answers)	Weak motivators (1-25% of respondents' answers)
Sales bonuses High salary Bonuses and other financial incentives	Packages of social benefits Payment for training and continuing education programs Maintaining an attractive balance of the regime of work and rest Friendly corporate (intra-organizational) climate Additional benefits Moral encouragement Rewarding the best employees	Cancellation (reduction) of cash bonuses Feedback from subordinates with a leader Participation in management Fame of an organization Obtaining new knowledge and skills Interesting work System of fines	Disciplinary action Sense of pride in their work Achievement of organizational (corporate) goals Personality of a leader

Based on the analysis of the data presented in Table 1, the group of strong motivators includes exclusively external positive financial factors. Among the majority of average motivators, the main factors are factors affecting the financial condition of an employee and their expenses, as well as several non-financial measures. The category of moderate motivators turned out to be the most numerous; factors from all categories were presented in it. Weak motivators included disciplinary sanctions, which, according to the respondents, have a low impact, as well as factors associated with a sense of pride in their work, the personality of a leader and achievement of corporate goals.

It should be noted that the distribution of strong motivators for the employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains within the proposed groups showed a high consistency of respondents' opinions – the coefficient of variation was much less than 10% (Table 2).

Table 2. The assessment of the consistency of respondents' opinions

Groups of motivators	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation	The coefficient of variation, %
Strong	89.0	2.5	2.8
Average	64.4	6.8	10.6
Moderate	36.3	8.7	24.0
Weak	20.8	4.0	19.3

All summations should be considered homogeneous, but in moderate motivator groups, the degree of data dispersion must be recognized as significant (over 20%). Almost the same situation is observed among the data of the group of weak factors, where the coefficient of variation was close to 20%. Among the average

motivators, there is an average consistency of data, but this indicator is the closest to high consistency (up to 10%).

The distribution of the considered motivating factors based on the frequency of their use in the activities of employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains in practice is shown in Figure 3.

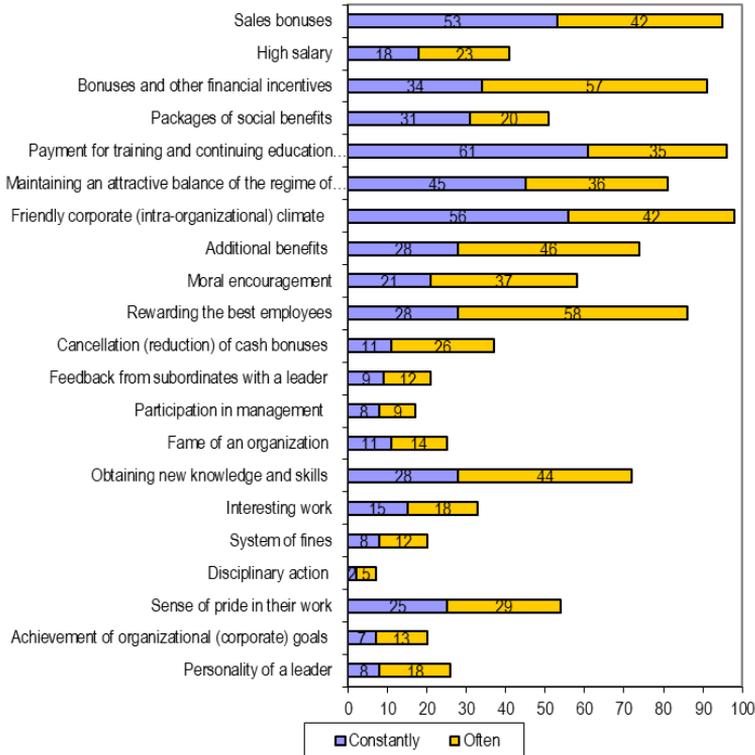


Figure 3. Distribution of the motivating factors based on respondents' assessment of the frequency of their use in practice

According to data presented in Figure 3 the most commonly used motivating factors in practice are sales bonuses (53% of respondents noted their use on an ongoing basis and 42% often), creating and maintaining a friendly corporate (intra-organizational) climate (56% – constantly and 42% – often), payment for training and continuing education programs (61% – constantly and 35% – often), rewarding of the best employees (28% – constantly and 58% – often) and additional benefits (28% – constantly and 46% – often).

DISCUSSION

As the results of the study showed, the most attractive motivating factors for employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains of Moscow are sales bonuses. Moreover, they are used in most cases on an ongoing basis or often. It should be assumed that largely due to the frequency of its use in practice, understandability and attractiveness for respondents, this factor has become a leader among all motivating factors. The second most attractive is another financial motivation tool – bonuses and other financial incentives, but according to the respondents' answers, it is used a little less often than sales bonuses. To a somewhat lesser extent,

respondents are also attracted by high salaries, but far from all pharmaceutical organizations can offer such, which makes the bonus system and remuneration even more attractive. The importance of the bonus system is also confirmed by the fact that it is the deprivation of bonuses and their reduction that respondents noted as the most effective measure among negative motivators.

All three of these motivation incentives relate to external positive financial factors. Most of the respondents identified them as strong motivators, and these opinions are characterized by a high degree of consistency.

According to the respondents, the packages of social benefits, payment for training and continuing education programs, an attractive balance of work and rest regimes and the provision of additional days off, which are often used in practice, can increase the motivation of employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains. The friendly intra-organizational climate and moral encouragement of employees, as well as the possibility of receiving feedback from a leader and solving problems of employees, also look important.

In most pharmaceutical organizations where respondents work, rewarding of the best employees is widely and often used (the reward of a financial nature and affecting the financial well-being of employees).

According to the respondents, the least influence on the motivation of employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains is exerted by disciplinary sanctions, as well as factors associated with a sense of pride in their work, the personality of a leader and achievement of corporate goals. This indicates an underdeveloped corporate culture, the priority of their own goals and tasks of employees in comparison with the goals and strategy of pharmaceutical companies and low commitment to corporate ideals and principles.

It should be noted that all respondents work in pharmacies and pharmacy chains of Moscow, so the results of this study characterize the pharmaceutical retail market of this particular territory. The sample structure indicates a representative nature of the experiment, but the sample size was relatively small, so it should be assumed that using more respondents would increase the accuracy of the study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the results of the experimental study, practical recommendations have been developed for the heads of pharmacies and pharmacy chains:

1. For the effective motivation of employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains, as well as achieving the effectiveness of an organization, it is necessary to use a set of internal and external motivating factors.

2. The greatest influence on employees is exerted by factors of external positive financial and relative financial motivation; therefore, they should be the main building of the personnel motivation system. The absence or insufficient level of application of financial motivating factors, as well as incentives that have a relative impact on the financial situation of employees, significantly affect the employees' interest in achieving the organizational goals and objectives of the pharmaceutical organization.

3. It should be assumed that the effectiveness of motivation for employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains would increase significantly if, in addition to the main financial and relatively financial motivators, internal motivating factors were used. Such as: maintaining an attractive balance of work and rest, providing additional days off and rewarding the best employees with vacation packages, membership cards for visits to fitness clubs, tickets for concerts, etc.

4. The most important among external non-financial factors for employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains should include those that have a positive psychological and moral impact. Such as: creating and maintaining a friendly corporate (intra-organizational) climate in the team, participation in management decisions in the organization, existence of feedback from subordinates with a leader and consideration of their wishes.

5. External negative motivating factors have the least effect on the motivation of employees of pharmacies and pharmacy chains. In cases where these factors are considered unfair, they can become powerful demotivators. At the same time, the competitive situation, the characteristics of pharmaceutical activities and

the retail sale of medicines require that employees strictly fulfill their duties and ethical principles. Therefore, penalties and disciplinary sanctions in certain situations can be applied as the most acceptable and effective incentive to increase the effectiveness of employees on certain specific tasks.

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