MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MANAGEMENT CENTER
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA
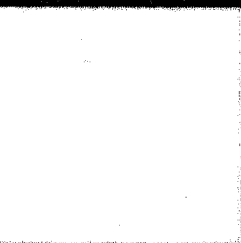
APPROVAL PAGE

TITLE OF THE PROJECT PAPER:

ORGANIZATIONAL MOTIVATION: A BEHAVIOURALLY BASED MEASURE OF EMPLOYEE NEEDS IN MALAYSIAN ORGANIZATIONS

NAME OF CANDIDATE : HARMINDER SINGH A/L MOKHTAR SINGH

MATRIC NO   : G 9815529

The undersigned certifies that the above candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the project paper proposed in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Masters of Business Administration

Supervisor

(PROFESSOR DR. MOKDAD MOHAMED
PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
International Islamic University Malaysia

Date : 0 3 MAR 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendix

Sample of questionnaire

PREFACE

It is indeed with much relief that I see these surprisingly 'stress free' words being typed. It has been a stressful period throughout the course and the project with a change in my job with which came the expansion and increased workload and the juggling between four 'jobs': student, career, husband and father---the topic for another research project is already in the making!

I would firstly like to thank and express my sincere appreciation to Professor Dr Mokdad Mohamed for his commitment and guidance, interesting and frank criticisms and especially for the benefit of his expertise, experience and unfailing patience with my analyses. I also take this opportunity to thank Professor Dr Mokdad for always being able to accommodate me in his busy schedule especially before he left for his homeland, Algeria.

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity the Management Centre of the International Islamic University had given me to pursue this excellent part-time MBA course which has enriched me with invaluable knowledge.

Many thanks to Dr Obiyathulla and Professor Haji Dr Saeed for their ever encouraging kind words and genuine advice which motivated me to complete this Project Paper. Many thanks also to Sister Yasmin who contributed by rightly and continuously reminding me and the rest of the students of the grave deadlines we had to meet.

To my three children and my wife, Dr Mona, who had to juggle with babysitting, work and put up with my mood swings whilst on the course. They always encouraged me and more often than not, had more faith in me than I did myself, especially during the most trying times.

Last but not least, a special thanks to the 32 students of batch six and seven of the MBA programme at the International Islamic University who had helped me to complete the questionnaire and in a special way, without whom I would not have been able to start this Project Paper let alone complete it.

Finally, the typing of this Project Paper has truly been an experience by itself. It has indeed been an interesting and trying phase of my life for me.

HARMINDER SINGH

PETALING JAYA, JUNE , 2001

1

"ORGANIZATIONAL MOTIVATION: A BEHAVIOURALLY BASED MEASURE OF EMPLOYEE NEEDS IN MALAYSIAN ORGANIZATIONS."

Abstract

Motivation in Malaysia is to a large extent influenced by the value system amongst all Malaysians who are from different ethnic backgrounds.[1] One of the most important determinants is the part played by the human resource department of organizations. Being able to motivate employees is one of the important keys to the success of the organization. In this paper, we focused on organizations in Malaysia in general. The survey in this paper attempts to look into the needs of employees in organizations and in particular, the needs based on Maslow's theory on motivation. The subjects in this study are employees of various organizations, the majority of whom are presently pursuing an MBA degree at the International Islamic University on a part-time basis.

PART A

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   WHAT IS AN ORGANIZATION

An organization is a structure of social system consisting of groups and individuals working together to meet some mutually agreed objectives.

Chester Barnard (1938)[2] defined a formal organization as a system or consciously coordinated activities of two or more persons. Therefore, it can be seen that people play

---

[1] Abdullah Asma. (1992*).* "Local Values in Malaysian Managerial Practices". Vol 1, No 1, pp 27-63. *Intan Management Journal.*

[2] Barnard C. (1938). *The Functions of the Executive.* Harvard University Press

an important role in organizations. Without them, there is no organization, no structure and no social unit.

1.2 DEFINITION OF NEEDS

A need is a constitutional or acquired desire for something. It is appeased only by satisfaction of the desire.[3] Needs are created whenever there is a physiological or psychological imbalance.

1.3 NEEDS OF EMPLOYEES

Employees have needs, just like any other individuals. An organization can have the perfect structure, objectives and functions but it is the people who make it come alive and at the same time, people need organizations too. Human organizations have been an integral part of societal existence, a basic resource to its survival, a living challenge to, as well as a continued opportunity for individual growth. The individual and the organization are like living organisms, each with its own strategy for survival and growth. The individual's strategy for existence is, at times, antagonistic to the strategy that guides the formal organization. The employee in his desire to satisfy his need is driven by a motive to alleviate that need. Some scholars even suggest that employees are motivated to use their jobs merely as a tool to satisfy their needs.[4] The motive requires some form of action plan and provides an energizing thrust towards reaching the incentive. Motivation has been defined as the set of processes that arouse, direct, and

---

[3] Maslow A. (1954). *Motivation & Personality*. Harper & Row
[4] Jerald Greenberg, Robert A. Baron. (2000). *Behavior In Organizations*. pp 132. Seventh Edition. Prentice Hall.

maintain human behavior toward attaining some definite goal.[5] This is the fundamental basis of the motivational process. For example, thirst, as a need, results in the individual seeking for water (a goal-directed behavior or drive) to alleviate his thirst (the incentive). After quenching his thirst, the initial state of inequilibrium is then restored.

Understanding the needs of an employee will, therefore, give an insight as to what motivates him to work.[6] No two individuals are the same or alike. Individual behavior in an organization is riddled with complexity and contradictions. One of the major paradoxes of organizational life is the maintenance of individuality and self-respect alongside the creation of cooperation and conformity.

1.4 MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES THAT DEAL WITH EMPLOYEE NEEDS-WITH REFERENCE TO THE MALAYSIAN CONTEXT

Organizations need to know what motivates their employees and what does not. The question that arises is why one is more or less motivated. There are many theories that relate to motivation; some said to come from within the individual that energize, direct and maintain his or her behavior to factors (surroundings or environmental) that affect a person. The theories have been broadly classified into two categories: the Content Theories and the Process Theories. We shall only highlight some of them briefly in this study.

---

[5] Jerald Greenberg, Robert A. Baron. (2000). *Behavior In Organizations*. pp 130. Seventh Edition. Prentice Hall.

[6] Charles Handy. (1994) *Understanding Organizations*. 4th Edition. Penguin Books.

1.5   Content Theories

This set of theories focus on why certain goals are more important to some people as compared to others. They emphasize on 'what' motivates a person.

1.5.1   Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Abraham Maslow identified five categories of human needs in his theory. These needs form a hierarchy and each need becomes active or aroused only when the lower needs are reasonably satisfied. Below are the needs in the lowest to the highest order.

a.   Physiological or Basic needs

b.   Safety needs

c.   Social needs

d.   Esteem needs

e.   Self-actualization needs

Those needs that have not been met will potentially motivate behavior, but needs that have already been satisfied will not. In Malaysia, basic amenities such as food, water and shelter are available to most of the population. Safety needs such as feeling secure and free from threats in their basic existence is seen through racial harmony amongst the different ethnic groups; in keeping with the policies laid down by the government. Employees in Malaysia need not worry about natural disasters such as earthquakes, terrorism and hurricanes and, hence, both organizations in Malaysia and investors from abroad are able to plan strategically and have long term visions and goals for their corporations and staff are able to plan their careers and 'where they want to be' in their strategic plans. Social needs, in fact, form a 'core' for the existence of the majority of the

Malaysians. Social units, families, feelings of worthiness, belonging to a particular community and identifying with culture groups are more or less a norm in the life of an individual. These needs are again (we discuss about the majority again) mostly fulfilled. This leaves us with the last two needs, namely esteem needs and self-actualization needs. *Esteem* needs are important for all workers in an organization. People need to feel recognized and appreciated and given due respect, for example, to a task completed well. They need to feel confident, capable and adequate. *Self - actualization* needs, according to Maslow's theory, are the ultimate human goal.[7] Most employees and employers, working in corporations, seek personal achievement; that is the capability of achieving everything one is capable of achieving. Hankins and Clark investigation revealed that a career choices in teaching had a great deal to do with the level of achievement an individual wanted in motivation.[8] In Malaysia, a lot depends on the way an individual is motivated and due to this a human resource department is developed in each organization.

1.5.2   ERG Theory

In response to reservations about Maslow's need hierarchy theory, psychologist Clayton Alderfer presented a simpler theory based on three levels of needs: existence, relatedness and growth (ERG).

---

[7] Abdel Rahman Ahmad in association with the Department of Political Science, International Islamic University, Selangor, Malaysia. "An Islamic Perspective On Organizational Motivation". pp 186-202, *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences.*

[8] Philip Banyard and Nicky Hayes. (1994). *Psychology: Theory and Application.* Second Edition. pp 363. Chapman and Hall.

He contended that several needs could motivate behavior simultaneously and a stepwise progression was therefore not necessary. People could also regress, returning to a lower-order need when sufficiently incited by the recurrence of an unfulfilled need.[i]

This theory has found a strong support among managers, bank employees and students. It provides a workable approach to motivation and its satisfaction-progression and frustration-regression components constitute a clear explanation of employee needs in an organization. In other words, unlike Maslow's theory of needs where he states that only after a need is fulfilled that one moves onto the next unfulfilled need, the ERG theory allows several needs to be required simultaneously to motivate a person. This seems more applicable to the Malaysian scenario as most of the employees need to feel that they have a good and happy relationship with their colleagues at work, and at the same time, they need to feel safe and fulfilled when basic physiological needs such as air-conditioning, equal treatment and work appreciation are met at work.

1.5.3 Need Achievement Theory

David McClelland (1961)[9] formulated this theory from his work at Harvard University in the 1960s as a result of research in the areas of the need for achievement. He proposed that everyone has three needs:

a. Need for affiliation

b. Need for power

c. Need for achievement

He contended that one need dominates over and above the other needs and affects

---

[i]McClelland C D. (1961). *The Achieving Society*. Van Nostrand Reinhold, New York.

7

and influences an individual's behavior. Employees with high achievement needs enjoy challenges and thrive in highly stimulating environments. They are best suited to situations where independent responsibility and autonomy prevail. In Malaysia, most corporations (except perhaps in the advertising industry and other similar industries) are not given autonomy to do what they want. Most organizations are still hierarchical even though much is spoken by Western management gurus about the bottom top approach, downsizing , more horizontal organization charts and empowerment. This could be due to the fact that a lot of technology-based inventions are imported from other countries (examples include components of machines, computer programmes and even computers). It is therefore pertinent, at this juncture, to note that the 'professional intellect' of the staff have been, to some extent, inspired by both the basic skills and needs that they have acquired and the creative type of education system they have progressed from. In Malaysia, most people still feel that they need to be guided and instructed as to what should be done (initiative and appraisals in both civil service and corporations are recent trends of the late 80's and 90's). It is, therefore, perhaps explainable why in our country, scientific discoveries are still much left to be desired.

Power-oriented employees seek advancement and aggressively assume responsibility to control work activities. In Malaysia, most corporations have the top - bottom approach, are hierarchical and centralized thereby hindering their employees from controlling their own activities and therefore making them less power oriented.

People with high affiliations to achievement on the other hand, prefer friendly and participative work environments where the quality of group interaction is more valued

8

than creativity and the ability to influence others. This seems to be the case with the majority of the employees in Malaysian corporations who are influenced strongly by the values and culture system in Malaysia. This will be discussed in depth herein below in this paper.

1.5.4 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

In the late 1950s, Frederick Herzberg (1959)[10] introduced his two-factor theory which suggested that employee satisfaction is achieved mainly through changes in the job content. There is a set of factors associated with dissatisfaction such as salary, working conditions (hygiene or maintenance factors) and other set of factors associated with satisfaction such as increased responsibility and recognition (motivation factors). The hygiene and motivation factors are, however, not opposites of each other.

Herzberg's study is important since his ideas have led to considerable research in the area of motivation and a greater emphasis on job enrichment. This is basically a job design approach that upgrades the job-task. In Malaysia, many corporations have adequate working conditions in their corporations and as such, the motivational factors vary from one organization to another.

1.5.5 Theory 'X' and Theory 'Y'

McGregor (1960)[11] described two very different sets of assumptions:theory 'X' and theory 'Y'. Theory 'X' assumes that people are naturally lazy, lack ambition, self-centered and need to be managed. Theory 'Y', on the other hand, assumes that people are

---

[10] Herzberg F, Mausner B & Snyderman B. (1959). *The Motivation of Work.* Wiley, New York
[11] McGregor D (1960). *The Human Side of Enterprise.* McGraw-Hill, New York.

9

naturally hardworking, ambitious, creative and need not be controlled for good results in their job.

In Malaysia, it may be argued that Theory 'X' can be applied to explain the attitude of employees in the civil service departments. We are not saying that all employees in the civil service departments can be placed in the same category but most of them will probably fall within this category. The attitude of the employees can be attributed to the lack of certain aspects of the human resource development (HRD). It is only now, in the late 90's, with the improvement and importance of human resource development (HRD) that certain aspects of human resources such as appraisals, training and workshops have drastically been improved. This, of course, can also be explained by the improved economy of Malaysia and hence the availability of the resources, a mix of flavors and influence from the West in terms of organization skills perhaps due to the training of more Malaysians in the West.

Theory 'Y' is, however, more difficult to be generalized in the Malaysian context. It can happen in any type of organizational setting. It basically reflects on the demotivation process of employees, and this in turn reflects on poor HRD programmes and organizational skills of individuals and / or corporations.

2.0   The Process Theories

These theories seek to explain 'why' individuals behave in a particular manner. It does not assume that individuals come complete with a package of motives to pursue. These theories basically deal with formula, measurements and calculations based on the various aspects that have been discussed in the 'content theories'. Briefly, there are three

types of variables that influence motivation in the Process Theories, discussed herein below.

2.1 Expectancy Theory

Victor Vroom (1964)[12] founded the idea that people prefer certain outcomes from their behavior over others. This is an approach to measure human motivation.

His model is based on three key variables:

a. valence

b. instrumentality

c. expectancy

Basically, by this theory, a combination of valence and expectancy determines the person's motivation for a given form of behavior.

2.2 The Porter and Lawler Expectancy Model

This model explains beyond the motivational force and considers performance as a whole. It points out that effort expended does not necessarily lead to performance. It is rather influenced by:

i) individual's abilities and traits; and

iii) the person's role perceptions.

In other words, by this theory, one needs to look at the efforts, abilities and traits, role perception, performance and rewards with respect to an individual's motivational factors in a corporation.

---

[12] Vroom H V (1964). *Work and Motivation*. Wiley, New York.

3.0   ORGANIZATIONS IN MALAYSIA

3.1   Introduction

Many newly industrialized countries, including Malaysia, are dependent, and to some extent subservient to the international economic order. Malaysia's export of its primary commodities such as rubber, tin, palm oil, petroleum and timber and its more recent exports of manufactured products such as electronic components, textiles and rubber products are subjected to the vagaries and uncertainties of the international economy. At the beginning of the 1980's, the world scenarios were stark and gloomy, with protectionism restricting the growth of her economy. Foreign investment was assigned a critical role in the industrialization strategy. One of Malaysia's main strengths in attracting investment lies in its labour.[ii] Competing on the same score sheet are numerous other newly industrialized countries, thirsty for capital investments and employment generated through their industrialization programmes. Given this backdrop, it has been increasingly emphasized that Malaysia's survival is dependent on the existence of a highly motivated and productive workforce with the right work ethics.[iii]

3.2   The Malaysian Scenario

Over the last several years, the Malaysian management circles have been exposed to a number of Western management theories and practices including those related to employee motivation. Not all of these theories and practices, however, are necessarily

directly applicable to the Malaysian workforce.[13] It is important to note that as we move from one culture to another, we observe systematic differences which may be viewed as important for effective motivation.

As Malaysians become more exposed to globalization and international business events and trends, they would have to re-examine their current organizational structures and work practices so as to be able to respond to the values and standards expected of the global workforce.

It is widely believed that the behavior of senior managers and leaders in an organization determines the corporate culture and value system of that organization. They are responsible for the motivation, commitment and the attainment of goals by their employees. The managers have to be role models that are visible to the organization. Local values play an important role in determining the corporate culture. Organizational structures of the past which tend to undermine the values of knowledge-sharing and speed and accuracy in information flow and multicultural team effectiveness, may have to make way for new structures and processes which are less bureaucratic and hierarchical in nature.[14] Similarly, work practices which provide low value added work, which cause wastage and serving as roadblocks to workplace efficiency and effectiveness will have to be replaced. New ways of getting things done must be explored if Malaysian -based organizations want to remain responsive to the needs of the workplace. However,

---

[13] Singh & Abdullah. (1992). "Influence of Ethnic Values At The Malaysian Workplace." *Malaysian Management Review.* Vol 27, No 1.

[14] Sivalingam G, Yong P, (1992) "Models of Corporate Culture and Its Implications for Malaysia." pp 20-23, Vol 1, No 1, *Intan Management Journal.*

some of these new structures and work practices may run counter to the prevailing cultural values and beliefs of the society.

Malaysians at the workplace come from many different ethnic origins. Over the years each ethnic group has been able to retain its own unique identity and culture and live in harmony with others. While we differ in many symbolic expressions, our common denominator lies in our deep-seated Asian values. For example, for Muslims, values like 'Iman', 'Ilmu', 'Amal' and 'Akal' are important and these values have been maintained and become part of a Muslim employee's culture.[15]

Therefore, as it can be seen, Malaysians at their work place are involved with each other at three main levels: Intra-cultural, Inter-cultural and Cross-cultural levels. It is important to note the above levels because these levels play an important part in the understanding of motivational needs in the Malaysian context. This is quite in contrast to the original work of Taylor Nelson in the United Kingdom, where he divided people into categories based on their individual drives.[16]

For example, let us look into the valuse of respect for elders. The hierarchical feature of the Malaysian society and its revered values of respect for elders, a collectivistic orientation, harmony and face saving - when carried to the extreme - could lead to promoting a climate of unquestioning loyalty, compliance and symbolic conformity towards their senior elders. This leads to a reluctant posture on the part of subordinates to initiate bold initiatives and an avoidance of open and frank feedback so as to preserve

---

[15] Abdullah, A. (1992). 'Local Values in Management Practices : Some Implications for Leading, Motivating and Communicating the Malay Workforce'. Vol 1, No 1, pp 27 60, *Intan Management Journal.*

[16] Charles Handy. (1994) *Understanding Organizations.* 4th Edition. Penguin Books.

group harmony. When these situations occur, it is important for managers to assess the impact of certain cultural values on work behaviors and begin to search for ways to address dysfunctional elements before their workforce can be *motivated* to go the 'extra mile' and, thus satisfy the needs of their customers.

3.3   Motivation Programmes in Malaysia

It was noted in the last few years that there were numerous management practices and training programmes which had originated in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and Australia and marketed directly to the Malaysian training scene. Training packages like Managerial Grid, Team building, Leadership and Motivation have been 'imported' in package form without any adaptation and incorporation of values, sensitiveness and aspirations of the Malaysian culture.

The most valuable framework to help managers better understand differences between national cultures was developed by Geert Hofstede, where in his study he surveyed over 116,000 employees in 40 countries who worked for a single multinational corporation.[17] His database revealed that national culture had a major impact on employees' work - related values and attitudes. Hofstede found that managers and employees generally vary on four dimensions of national culture:

1.   individualism versus collectivism

2.   power distance

3.   uncertainty avoidance

4.   quantity versus quality of life

---

[17] Abdullah A, Gallagher E, (1995). 'Managing With Cultural Differences'. pp 1- 16, Vol 30, No 2, *The Journal of the Malaysian Institution of Malaysian Management Review.*

Hofstede found that the degree of individualism in a country was closely related to the country's wealth. In Malaysia, we feel that the following holds true for the present situation about the cultural dimensions; Malaysians are more *collective* than individualistic whilst *power distance* is large. Titles, rank and status carry a lot of weight. In terms of *uncertainty avoidance*, it can be concluded that the situation provides high uncertainty avoidance as people feel threatened by uncertainty and ambiguity and mechanisms are therefore created to provide security and reduce risks. With respect to *quantity of life*, Malaysia is similar to Japan and therefore has a high score on this fourth dimension. This study also helps managers to identify the countries where they are likely to find 'culture shock' and hence they may have to change their style of management when they do business there. Hofstede had stated that theories based on Western cultures cannot be universally shared by management elsewhere. Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another.[18] The "oil of corporate values may not mix with the native 'water' of a country's culture" is a clear indication that there is a conflict between basic corporate values of Western-based organizations and local culture (Shiomo Maital, 1993; Hofstede, 1993).[19] A prominent Harvard University professor, John Kotter, said in his book *A Force for*

---

[18] Singh & Abdullah. (1992). 'Influence of Ethnic Values At The Malaysian Workplace.' *Malaysian Management Review*. Vol 27, No 1,

[19] Abdullah A. (1994). 'Value Based Management And Development: The Malaysian Paradigm'. Vol 1, pp 36 -69, *Intan Management Journal.*

Change that a leader can use a three-stage process to achieve successful change, that is establishing direction, aligning people, and motivation.[20]

Managers, in their leadership capacity, play an important part in shaping motivation, commitment and predisposition's of the workforce in an organization. They provide direction, focus, meaning and inspiration to those who work for them. As architects of an organization, managers need to project themselves as role models that embody and convey in actions and words, desirable attitudes, values and beliefs of their workforce.

Leadership and motivation are related closely to each other. Related to leadership is motivation which is the willingness to achieve the goals of the organization. Leaders can motivate their employees by nurturing an environment where work is seen as enriching and fulfilling, thus encouraging employees to contribute and brainstorm ideas and put in their best efforts to enhance productivity. There are a number of concepts and theories which have originated from the West on how to motivate and lead others (as mentioned herein above). However, many of these may be culturally in-appropriate and ir-relevant for the Malaysian context because of their underlying values and assumptions.

In relation to motivation, Malaysians, in general, are usually motivated when they are able to develop and cultivate good relationships with bosses and subordinates. In some cultures, the success of a group outweighs one's own self- actualization need.[21]

---

[20] Hamid S. (1996) Management 'Values and Good Administrative Practices For Vision 2020'. *Malaysian Management Review*. Vol 31, No 1 –19.

[21] Singh and Abdullah. (1992*). '* Influence of Ethnic Values At The Malaysian Workplace.' *Malaysian Management Review*. Vol 27, No 1.

Another motivating factor at work is an atmosphere that is friendly and supportive. Again , the influence of ethnic values plays an important role.

3.4 Values

3.4.1 Values Relating To Leadership and Motivation in Malaysia In Different Groups

Our discussion shall both focus on both leadership and motivation together as they complement each other in many ways. In discussing motivation and leadership, it is interesting to note the differences in the different ethnic groups. Most of the discussion herein below is based on values that are perceived by the society about different ethnic groups, though not necessarily practiced by them !

3.4.2 On Leadership

- *Personal attributes*

  The personal attributes of a Malay leader would normally include the following:

  - having a large and an informal power base to enable him to achieve his ends mainly through persuasion;

  - working unobtrusively and enlisting the assistance and moral support of others such as the religious leader *(Imam)*;

  - being devout in his religious beliefs and conscientious (*warak and alim*) in practicing traditional rites and ceremonies;[22]

---

[22] Abdullah, A. (1992*).* 'Local Values in Management *Practices :* Some Implications for Leading, Motivating and Communicating the Malay Workforce'. Vol 1, No 1, pp 27 60, *Intan Management Journal.*

- being sincere, humble and tactful (someone who is pushy is considered offensive);

-showing concern for the welfare of others; and

- being trustworthy, honest, just, fair and generous.

All the above mentioned qualities are stated in the Holy Qu'ran :

"Those in authority are to be selected from among the members of the community, on the grounds that they are capable and trustworthy" - SURA : 4.58

The Chinese, too, respect their leaders, especially those who are professionally qualified professionally. Those who are highly respected because of their wealth, social standing and educational achievements are often well-connected and known by many people. Since they are able to command resources to ensure that objectives are achieved, followers trust their leadership.[23]

Generally, these attributes also apply to Indians who devote much of their success to 'karma'. They admire leaders who set good examples and are selfless and committed to a cause.

- *On Family status*

To the Chinese, the status of the family is of utmost importance. Their lives evolve around building the family. Hence, the head of the family is considered the leader.

For the Malays, an individual becomes a leader largely on the basis of status and family into which he was born or the status subsequently conferred upon him. The Malay leader is often a man of high social standing who comes from a noble family, someone who is well versed in social conventions, 'adat', and customs of the people. He is likely

---

[23] Poon J. (1995). 'Effects Of Perceived Transformational Leadership Behaviours On Follower Satisfaction And Motivation : Survey Results Of Malaysian Managers.' *Malaysian Management Review*, Vol 30 , No2.

19

to come from the social strata of the royalty (*raja*) or the leaders (*orang besar*) but not the commoner (*orang kebanyakan*). The latter is, however, now gaining visibility, status and influence in the political arena through education and greater social interaction.

3.4.3 On Motivation

Factors such as opportunities for self-development, contributions to the community and nation and harmonious relationships are important to Malaysians. The following are some observations related to motivation.

- *Group affiliation*

Most Malaysians have a strong affinity for group affiliation.[24] They derive their identity from being part of a collective – hence, the pursuit of self-esteem and self-actualization could be misinterpreted as deviant behavior. In both, the Chinese and Malay cultures, traditional communal responsibility is cherished as is clearly evident in the clan groupings and '*gotong royong*' (doing charity together) concepts.

However, this traditional communal responsibility termed collectivism by Hofstede is not as simplistic as it looks. Malaysians may be collectivistic within their own clans or communities, but their level of cooperation and trust could decrease and competitiveness increase with the society at large.

- *Success symbols*

Malays are motivated by their affiliations to groups, families, friends, hometown (kampung) and Islamic brotherhood. They measure success in terms of rapport with family, friends and associates and are attracted by tangible rewards such as a piece of

---

[24] Abdullah A. (1994). 'Value Based Management And Development: The Malaysian Paradigm.' Vol 1, pp 36 -69, *Intan Management Journal*.