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MOTIVATION FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF SOLDIERS: EVIDENCE FROM THE 109TH ARTILLERY BATTALION, 9TH ARTILLERY REGIMENT, THAILAND

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Abstract

The objectives of this research were 1) to analyze the motivation for the performance of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment and 2) to compare the motivation for the performance of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, classified by the independent variables. The quantitative cross-sectional analytic study collected data from 152 troops using a questionnaire with a reliability score of .92. Statistics included frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, One-Way ANOVA for variance analysis, and pairwise testing using Scheffé's Method. The research findings revealed that the level of motivation for the performance of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment was overall at the high level. The aspect of commanders had the highest mean. When comparing the motivation for the performance, it was found that age, educational level, and salary were different at the statistically significant level of .05. There was no difference in experience, rank, and status. Therefore, in formulating the policies to enhance the motivation for the performance, the management should prioritize the variables of age, educational level, and salary.

Keywords: Motivation, Performance, Soldier

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Introduction

At present, the development of government operations systems focuses on the participation of the public in expressing opinions and monitoring the performance of government agencies (Swasthaisong, 2019; Sriram, Misomnai, Metasuttirat & Rajphaetyakhom, 2019). The development of the government system will be characterized by proactive and efficient operations, reducing redundancy in administration, and emphasizing the needs of people. In order to improve the organization's work to be more efficient, personnel within the organization should be systematically involved in developing, maintaining, and improving the organization for maximum benefits in the administration. The personnel of the public sector should perform their duties in a professional manner, possess actual knowledge and relevant experience, and be adaptable in applying their knowledge. Additionally, they should be able to effectively coordinate and respond to the needs of service users (Vyas, 2004; Vukonjanski et al., 2018; Quirk, 2019)

The administration in all aspects requires the fundamental factors of administration, namely Man, Money, Material, and Management (Jatmiko et al., 2021). Humans are considered the most valuable resource. In addition, in order to develop an organization and make progress, it is necessary to rely on efficient human resources. Work-life balancing for employees has become an important issue that organizational managers cannot overlook. Nowadays, the Thai bureaucratic system has developed various service formats for service users, including aspects such as welcoming, convenience, provision of information, consultation, advice, and problem-solving. These aspects are becoming increasingly important (Eneh & Awara, 2016; Sturges & Guest, 2004). The operation of the military in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, relies on providing services as one of the strategies of the government system to ensure satisfaction for the public using the services. If the operations of the military in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, or any other government agency can effectively meet the needs of the people, it will lead to success in building a positive image for the Thai bureaucratic system.

The operations of the military in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, are considered an organizational unit of the government that is closely related to the lives and well-being of the people. They are aware of the importance and benefits of serving the people as the main focus. Apart from their role as defenders of the nation, soldiers are also relied upon by the public in various aspects, including providing assistance during disaster, ensuring personal and property safety. These responsibilities are particularly significant in local areas where they bear a high level of responsibilities.

However, the key factor that will enable the operations of the military in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, to achieve their objectives and be close to the hearts of the people is the quality of their work. It is essential that every soldier feels wholehearted in carrying out their duties. This can be considered as a fundamental component of the government system. If the military personnel are not wholehearted in their work, even with good policies from commanding officers, it is impossible for the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, to achieve the set policies. Therefore, upon deeper reflection, it can be observed that the most crucial factor for any organization, including the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, is the personnel within that organization. The development of high-quality and efficient personnel is of great importance in preparing the soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, to be connected to the government system or new services that will arise and effectively respond to the needs of the public (Kirchner & Akdere, 2014).

One of the administration techniques that maximizes efficiency and is favored by administrators is motivation. It stimulates soldiers in the organization to have the intention and enthusiasm to fulfill their duties. Motivation is essential in achieving organizational goals

(Irawati et al., 2021). When individuals receive proper motivation, they are dedicated and encouraged to perform their duties to the best of their abilities, striving to produce excellent results. They feel a sense of belonging to the organization and have a desire to develop the organization to achieve its goals. This ultimately contributes to the progress of the organization. The motivation of soldiers is, therefore, a crucial aspect that fosters enthusiasm in their work and goodwill towards the organization.

Based on the aforementioned importance and issues as well as relevant documents and research, the researchers were interested in studying the creation of motivation in the work performance of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment. This research aims to benefit the improvement and development of personnel management systems including the formulation of appropriate policies for the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment. The objective is to enable soldiers and military personnel to perform their duties more efficiently. The study also aims to examine the level of motivation in the work performance of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, and compare motivation levels categorized by independent variables such as age, educational level, experience, position in the organization, salary rate, and status.

Literature Review

The received income and benefits have a significant impact on the motivation of military personnel. Herzberg (1968) and Maslow (1943) stated that financial and welfare needs are fundamental factors in creating motivation in the workplace. Additionally, Vroom (1964) in the Expectancy Theory suggested that organizational policies influence expectations of job performance and subsequently affect the motivation of military personnel. The work environment, as promoted by Hackman & Oldham (1976) in the Job Characteristics Model, plays a role in generating job satisfaction and motivation among military personnel, with factors such as job variety and task significance contributing to the satisfaction and motivation of the performance of soldiers. Furthermore, the management and leadership style of superiors affect the motivation of military personnel. Bass (1985) emphasized that leaders who can bring about change and inspire motivation within their teams contribute to improving work efficiency. Job stability is also crucial in fostering motivation among military personnel. Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt (1984) stated that military service is an occupation that represents the aspirations of individuals who desire to demonstrate bravery and progress in their careers. This is as indicated by Locke (1968) in the Goal-Setting Theory. Career advancement opportunities and personal development can greatly enhance motivation among military personnel. Furthermore, recognition and support from superiors and committees have an impact on military personnel's motivation, as highlighted by Deci & Ryan (2000) in the Self-Determination Theory. Perceiving success in one's work has a positive effect on self-confidence and motivation. Bandura (1977) proposed in the Social Learning Theory. It is evident that various factors contribute to the motivation of military personnel, including income and benefits, organizational policies, work environment, leadership, career stability, career advancement, recognition, and perception of success. When considering these factors, managers should reinforce and improve organizational policies to be appropriate, promote a positive work environment, and support the well-being and motivation of military personnel. Good relationships with supervisors should be built with the focus on giving recognition and respect as well as promoting recognition of military achievements.

Research Methods

Population and Sample

The population includes 250 soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment (9th Artillery Regiment, 2022). The sample was soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th

Artillery Regiment. The Krejcie and Morgan's prefabricated table was used to obtain a number of 152 samples (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

Data Collection

The tool used in this research was a questionnaire that asked about the basic information of the respondents. The research tool was a questionnaire consisting of 2 parts as follows:

Part 1 : General information of the respondents consisted of age, education level, experience, position in the organization, salary rate and status which is a multiple-choice question.

Part 2: Motivation for the performance of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment. It was a questionnaire on 8 motivational aspects, namely income and welfare, battalion policy, operational conditions, commanding, career stability, career advancement, respect and the perception of success. It looks like a 5-level rating scale (Rating Scale of Likert). The created tool had content validity, correctness, appropriateness, and consistency with the objectives of 5 experts. Then the tool was tested with a non-sample group of 30 people to find the confidence value using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The confidence value was 0.92.

The process of data collection from the sample group is as follows:

1) The researchers wrote a letter to the Faculty of Political Science, Bangkokthonburi University, to request permission to send a collaborative letter to the target group battalion in order to collect data through a questionnaire designed using the Google Form system. This method was chosen for convenience and efficiency in responding to the questionnaire. It was also suitable for the situation of the COVID-19 virus outbreak.

2) The researchers sent the link generated from Google Form to the coordinating officers in the battalion to request data collection. A total of 152 responses were received through Google Form, which accounted for 100%.

Data Analysis

The researchers conducted data analysis using a ready-made social science software, as follows:

Part 1 : Basic information of the respondents was analyzed using frequency distribution and percentages. The results were presented in a table.

Part 2 : The motivation level of soldiers in the battalion was analyzed to find the mean and standard deviation. The results were presented in a table, with the average values translated into 5 levels.

Part 3 : The motivation level was compared with three or more independent variables using One-Way ANOVA to determine if there were statistically significant differences. If significant differences were found, pairwise comparisons would be conducted using Scheffe's Method.

Research Results

The overall motivation level of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, was high. When considering each aspect, it was found that all aspects had a high level of motivation. The order of the highest to lowest average values is as follows; commanding officers, battalion policies, career advancement, perception of success, working conditions, acceptance and adherence, job security, and income and benefits.

When comparing the motivation levels of soldiers in the 109th Artillery Battalion, 9th Artillery Regiment, based on independent variables, significant statistical differences were found in age, educational level, and salary at a significance level of 0.05. Pairwise analysis of means revealed significant differences between soldiers aged 19-25 and 26-30 years, as well as between soldiers with a high school diploma or equivalent and those with a bachelor's degree. Significant differences were also found among soldiers with salaries between 9,000-11,000 baht and 15,000-20,000 baht. The statistical significance was at 0.05 level. However, there

were no significant differences in motivation levels based on experience, position, and status shown as Table 1.

Table 1 Comparison of respondents' different demographic factors and motivation

Independent Variables		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	.267	3	.089	3.997	.009**
	Within Groups	3.297	148	.022		
	Total	3.564	151			
Educational Level	Between Groups	.262	3	.087	3.906	.010**
	Within Groups	3.303	148	.022		
	Total	3.564	151			
Experiences	Between Groups	.115	3	.038	1.651	.180
	Within Groups	3.449	148	.023		
	Total	3.564	151			
Position	Between Groups	.005	2	.002	.094	.910
	Within Groups	3.560	149	.024		
	Total	3.564	151			
Salary	Between Groups	.260	3	.087	3.886	.010**
	Within Groups	3.304	148	.022		
	Total	3.564	151			
Status	Between Groups	.045	2	.023	.956	.387
	Within Groups	3.519	149	.024		
	Total	3.564	151			

** $p \leq .01$

Conclusion and Discussion

Age has an impact on the motivation of soldiers in performing their duties. In general, the desires and interests of soldiers in different age groups may vary. For example, younger soldiers may be interested in learning new skills and self-development, while older soldiers may be more concerned with job security and involvement in decision-making. This is consistent with the research findings of Twenge et al. (2010), which explored differences in expectations and job interests among different age groups. The study found that older age groups showed more interest in job security and access to organizational resources, while younger age groups demonstrated a higher interest in learning and self-development.

Educational level also influences the motivation of soldiers in their work. Generally, soldiers with higher levels of education tend to show more interest in job challenges and developing new skills, while soldiers with lower levels of education may prioritize job security and benefits. This is consistent with the research conducted by Ng et al. (2010) which examined the relationship between educational level and job success. The study found that soldiers with higher levels of education had greater job success, which may contribute to their motivation in performing their duties.

Differences in salary can have an impact on the motivation of soldiers in performing their duties, according to Locke's Goal-Setting Theory (1968) and Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964). Salary is an important factor in stimulating soldier motivation. This is consistent with the research conducted by Naz (2015), which examined the relationship between soldiers' salary expectations and motivation in their work. The study found that soldiers with higher income tend to have a higher motivation in their work. However, the importance of salary may vary based on individual characteristics. Practically, the differences in salary may affect motivation in performing duties. It is important to consider other factors that influence soldier

motivation, such as job satisfaction, work challenges, and job satisfaction. The importance given to salary is just one of many factors that impact soldier motivation.

Differences in experience may not necessarily have a direct impact on motivation in performing duties and depend on other factors that influence soldier motivation. However, soldiers with more experience may have greater confidence and ability to solve problems and handle work situations, which can affect their work and motivation. This agrees with the research conducted by Gagné & Deci (2005) in the Self-Determination Theory. The theory suggests that soldiers' internal needs derived from work can influence motivation. Work experience can influence soldiers' internal needs.

Although differences in job positions may not always have a direct impact on motivation in performing duties, in reality, different job positions can influence the motivation of soldiers depending on various factors such as responsibility, development opportunities, and job significance. This aligns with the research conducted by (Tirana et al., 2023), which studied the relationship between job positions and soldier motivation. The study found that job positions with higher responsibility, development opportunities, and job significance tend to enhance motivation in soldiers' work. Therefore, different job positions can have varying levels of motivation in performing duties based on their importance, challenges, and responsibilities associated with the job. However, it is essential to consider other factors such as work environment and relationship with superiors, as they can also influence soldier motivation.

The status of soldiers may have some influence on their motivation in performing duties. However, in many cases, differences in status may not directly affect soldier motivation. The most important factors in creating motivation in work are having clear goals, support from superiors, and development opportunities. This is highlighted by the research conducted by Ng et al. (2006), which studied the relationship between soldier status and job success. The research found that job success is more related to work skills and dedication than to soldier status. Therefore, different statuses may not directly impact motivation in performing duties. Developing abilities, setting goals, and receiving support from superiors can increase motivation. It is important to provide opportunities for all soldiers with abilities and enthusiasm in their work to achieve success.

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations can be made:

- 1) Support academic development by emphasizing opportunities and promoting education to enhance the knowledge and skills of soldiers in the battalion. This can include organizing supplementary educational courses and providing additional training programs.
- 2) Foster motivation in the military profession by developing a structure of responsibility and career advancement pathways in the battalion to provide opportunities for promotion and skill development to support professional growth in the military career.

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