Beyond Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation: A Meta-Analysis on Self-Determination Theory’s Multidimensional Conceptualization of Work Motivation

Self-determination theory (SDT) adopts a multidimensional view on motivation. It distinguishes amotivation, four different types of extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation. This meta-analysis aims to assess the added value of this complex multidimensional view by furthering the debate on the quantitative and qualitative differences between these types and assessing their unique and incremental validity in predicting organizational behavior. Meta-analytic findings from 165 samples support this differentiation, but also add precision to SDT: Overall, intrinsic motivation is the most important type of motivation to predict employee well-being, attitudes and behavior, yet identification is more powerful in predicting performance and OCB. We address conceptual and methodological issues arising from this research and begin attempts to integrate SDT with other aspects of the divergent motivation literature.

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