Frederick Herzberg and the Theory of the Two Factors in the contribution to the prevention of absenteeism at work

Frederick Herzberg e a Teoria dos Dois Fatores na contribuição para a prevenção do absenteísmo no trabalho

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ABSTRACT

The objective was to reflect on the key concept of labor motivation in the area in a dialogical perspective from the perspective of Frederick Irving Herzberg. It was a descriptive study of qualitative approach of the theoretical-reflective type, anchored in the concept of labor motivation proposed by psychologist Frederick Irving Herzberg. It was perceived that Herzberg’s theory, decodes the motivational factors of employees in a company, bringing important elements for the construction and planning, relates two distinct classes of factors that condition the behavior generate satisfaction in the employees of a company, the hygienic classified by the theorist as unpleasant factors and the motivational considered factors that please the employee, such factors reflect directly on working conditions and their productivity. It was concluded that job satisfaction brings motivating factors that can consequently positively influence the rates of absenteeism causing its reduction, professional dissatisfaction causes a series of losses to the organization and the decrease in performance and productivity of employees.

Keywords: absenteeism, worker health, quality of life at work, organizations, theory of two factors.

RESUMO

O objetivo foi refletir sobre o conceito-chave de motivação laboral na área numa perspectiva dialógica sob a perspectiva de Frederick Irving Herzberg. Tratou-se de um estudo descritivo, de abordagem qualitativa, do tipo teórico-reflexivo, ancorado no conceito de motivação laboral proposto pelo psicólogo Frederick Irving Herzberg. Percebeu-se que a teoria de Herzberg, decodifica os fatores motivacionais dos funcionários de uma empresa, trazendo elementos importantes para a construção e planejamento, relaciona duas classes distintas de fatores que condicionam o comportamento e geram satisfação nos funcionários de uma empresa, os higiênicos classificados pela teórico como fatores desagradáveis e os motivacionais considerados fatores que agradam ao funcionário, tais fatores refletem diretamente nas condições de trabalho e na sua produtividade. Concluiu-se que a satisfação no trabalho traz fatores motivadores que podem consequentemente influenciar positivamente nos índices de absenteísmo causando sua redução, a insatisfação profissional provoca uma série de prejuízos para a organização e a diminuição do desempenho e da produtividade dos colaboradores.

Palavras-chave: absenteísmo, saúde do trabalhador, qualidade de vida no trabalho, organizações, teoria dos dois fatores.
1 INTRODUCTION

Seeking to improve the work environment should be a constant challenge for any manager to prevent absences from work, since the impacts generated by this problem affect both actors in this scenario, employer and employee. This problem can bring losses to the individual who practices such action and also to the employer institution, generating absenteeism (DE OLIVEIRA et al., 2023). After all, employee satisfaction is the key to reducing work absenteeism and promoting increased productivity, engagement, greater creativity and collaborative team interaction, directly impacting results.

The Herzberg Theory decodes the motivational factors of employees in a company, bringing important elements for construction and planning, and is of great value for more assertive decision-making that improves and boosts the operational and behavioral development of the individuals involved (HERZBERG, 2015).

Frederick Irving Herzberg (1923-2000), born in Lynn, Massachusetts, was a psychologist and important American professor, one of the most influential names in business management, author of the "Two Factor Theory" (CHIAT; PANATIK, 2019). In 1939, he began his studies at the City College of New York, which were interrupted to serve the army and back to City College, he graduated in 1946, then joined the University of Pittsburgh, where he did his postgraduate studies. At the same time, he taught psychology at Case Western Research University in Cleveland, where he established a Department of Mental Health (MANSO PINTO, 2002). In 1972, he was appointed Professor of Management in the College of Business. He published several works of relevance to the scientific community such as "Motivation to Work (1959)"; "Work and the Nature of Man (1966)" and "Once Again, How to Motivate Your Employees (1987)". Herzberg (2015) focused his studies on motivation in a very specific universe: the corporate one. In his book The Motivation to Work (Motivation to Work, 1959), he relates two distinct classes of factors that condition behavior generate satisfaction in the employees of a company, the hygienic ones classified by the theorist as unpleasant factors and the motivational ones considered factors
that please the employee, such factors reflect directly on working conditions and their productivity.

It is necessary to reflect, however, that Herzberg works with the concept of no satisfaction as the opposite of satisfaction, and not dissatisfaction, as one would assume. Satisfaction expresses a contentment about a certain theme, this being the work, the result of the evaluation that the worker has about his work or the realization of his values through this activity, being a positive emotion of well-being (NOGUEIRA; OLIVEIRA, 2022).

The objective was to reflect on the key concept of work motivation in the area from a dialogical perspective from the perspective of Frederick Irving Herzberg.

2 METHODOLOGY

This was a descriptive study of a qualitative approach of the theoretical-reflective type (BALBINO et al, 2020), anchored in the concept of work motivation proposed by psychologist Frederick Irving Herzberg (2015).

In order to present a contextualized approach, a reflexive analysis was carried out by searching the scientific literature for productions based on the concepts mentioned in the Virtual Health Library (VHL), supported by the keywords: Absenteeism; Worker Health, quality of life at work, organizations, Theory of the two factors, Frederick Herzberg, and articles available in full and with significant content were selected to support the proposed discussion. It is noteworthy that there was no intention to carry out an integrative or systematic review of the literature, focusing only on theoretical reinforcement for the reflections made.

The reflection present in this article was extracted from the master's thesis: "Design Science Research: educational digital folder for reducing the motivating factors of absenteeism", under development at the University Center of Volta Redonda - UniFOA. The text is organized in the following sections: dissatisfaction in the Two Factor Theory and its contribution to work absenteeism; satisfaction in...
the Two Factor Theory and its contribution to the reduction of work absenteeism; professional motivation driven by Herzberg’s Theory.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Hygienic factors are considered those that aim to prevent employees from being dissatisfied, such as salary, social benefits, physical conditions of the work environment, growth opportunities, organizational climate, company policy (DE LAVOR et al., 2023). They are completely beyond the control of employees, totally determined by the organization of the company and its immediate or mediated management and related to the employee’s environment. The absence of hygienic or environmental factors demotivates, but their presence does not cause motivation (LUCATELLI et al., 2021), better saying the improvement of these factors does not necessarily result in greater motivation and job satisfaction, it only avoids dissatisfaction.

Motivating the employee can be an important strategy for the growth of the productive indexes of a company, according to Herzberg (2015) the motivational factors can be understood as those that concern the employees, and not the employing institution. These effectively cause motivation and a lasting, prolonged and positive satisfaction effect, generating increased productivity above the levels considered normal, previously measured in the work environment that applies this type of strategy.

Through the deliberation of this motivation, the freedom to decide how the work will be performed; the development, improvement and full use of their skills; self-realization in the fulfillment of tasks; responsibility for the position; the definition of goals and objectives, self-assessment of performance (FONTENELE, 2020), will make the employee feel confident, safe and supported by the company for the full performance of his function and with this there will possibly be a reduction in the rates of absenteeism at work. When these factors are present and positive in the work environment, they have the potential to significantly increase the motivation and satisfaction of employees involved in the work process.
(AZEREDO, 2019), bringing expressive results to the context, to everything related to the content, activities and tasks related to the position.

4 DISSATISFACTION IN THE TWO FACTOR THEORY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO ABSENTEEISM AT WORK

The theory brings hygienic factors that lead to dissatisfaction and that can consequently influence the rates of absenteeism at work, among many is the relationship with other employees that generates dissatisfaction at work and a series of undesirable behaviors (CRISPIM; CAPPELLOZZA, 2019) and generators of negative impacts on organizations and other factors already mentioned in this explanation, according to Herzberg (2015) "Idleness, indifference and irresponsibility are healthy responses to absurd work".

The conditions of the work environment can also be one of the factors associated with dissatisfaction since dissatisfaction at work damages the relationship between leadership and employees of a company (OZANAM et al., 2019), giving rise to high turnover rates. Business policy can generate dissatisfaction, business management is an extremely delicate and complex subject involving several variables (DE LIMA; DA SILVA, 2021), in this context corporate governance and management, aim to ensure the fulfillment of business purposes, in order to ensure that institutional objectives are achieved, business policies are created. However, the policies created do not always respect the collectivity and the general well-being, thus interfering with the claims and well-being of workers (MARGARITES, 2020) who are part of the hierarchical base.

Safety has been shown to be another factor of expression for job dissatisfaction, many professionals feel insecure due to several factors, insecurity as the perception of the worker’s impotence in maintaining the desired continuity of work, a characteristic experienced in the workplace. (DE SOUZA; MATTOS, 2020), a characteristic experienced in the workplace that arises from the interpretation they make of the existing clues, then, job insecurity is defined with the subjective perception of the worker regarding his situation at work, in which
there is an uncertainty about the future of the same and a concern about the consequences of the possible loss (GIACOMELLO et al., 2022).

Among the unsatisfactory factors, the most significant is the salary (OZANAM et al., 2019). Money is the driving force for the opening of several possibilities that the worker can have when performing his duties, with this there is a need to innovate so that there is an improvement in profitability, but public policies and poor government management make financial resources increasingly scarce for workers with low educational level (FARAH et al., 2020).

Salary remuneration can also generate dissatisfaction, the salary with monetary representation and the complementary benefits to it are the means by which employees aim to guarantee and acquire fundamental goods for their survival and satisfaction of their basic needs (OZANAM et al., 2019). When such value is considered by him as incompatible with his dedication to the activities performed, demotivation occurs, enabling absences from work, contributing to the increase in the rates of absenteeism at work.

5 SATISFACTION IN THE TWO-FACTOR THEORY AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO REDUCING ABSENTEEISM AT WORK

According to Herzberg (2015) "The more a person can do, the more you can motivate them." The theory brings motivating factors that lead to satisfaction and that can consequently influence the rates of labor absenteeism, responsibility, one of the motivating factors, which is offered to the worker makes him dedicate himself to new challenges that have been imposed on him so that he can have a hierarchical promotion in his work, thus raising their self-esteem and with this the incentive to develop and acquire confidence from their superiors in the designation of the responsibility that was offered to them (LEITE, 2020), through this motivation there will be an incentive to seek development in their actions, this being the development, another motivating factor for job satisfaction. career choice and improvement are influenced by the person's view of themselves and the environment, by the way they organize and perceive their surroundings, and by the aspects with which they identify (MOURÃO; FERNANDES, 2020).
It is important to emphasize that motivation is different for each individual, since each person has different culture, values, needs and desires from each other. According to Herzberg (2015) "If you want someone to do a good job, you have to give them a good job to do." This can oscillate the level of motivation and development of each person, since for some, small actions and attitudes of gratitude for the work developed will be enough to motivate them (LUIZ et al., 2019).

Such development has, therefore, a procedural and cyclical character deriving from the professional experience, involving diverse elements, such as desired objectives, professional identity, analysis of the competences already acquired, survey of gaps and learning opportunities, future perspectives and construction of a development plan that can be drawn up by both the company and the employee (MOURÃO; FERNANDES, 2020).

Professional recognition is a factor that generates satisfaction and can be considered by the Theory as one of the motivating items, and with this help reduce absenteeism. The fact of feeling valued and having recognition for what one does, is interpreted internally by individuals as a feeling of acceptance, approval in the work environment, being of vital importance for the health of the worker (OZANAM et al., 2019).

Professional growth, another motivating factor, generates satisfaction for workers, since it does not only mean promotions in positions, better remuneration conditions, acquisition of bonuses, new opportunities and recognition (LOURENÇO, 2021), it is also a set of actions to develop new professional skills, increase knowledge, gain experience and update the market and trends, thus not being linked only to growth in a single aspect (JÚNIOR, 2023).

Achievement capacity is also a factor addressed as a motivator for satisfaction and concerns the amount of energy that is available to improve performance, in order to meet personal and professional standards of excellence (OLIVEIRA, 2020). People with a good capacity for achievement have high standards of demand that lead them to permanently and consistently seek ways to improve their performance.
Personal fulfillment is characterized by a series of attributes and qualities that contribute to a sense of personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Professional fulfillment is the feeling of satisfaction and success in relation to one’s chosen career or profession (GATTAI; CASTELHANO, 2023). This may include developing relevant skills and knowledge, advancing in one’s career, achieving financial goals, succeeding in a project, or receiving recognition for one’s work accomplishments. Corroborating with Herzberg (2015) in his speech “True motivation comes from achievement, personal development, job satisfaction and recognition.” In this way, it is possible to create different motivational strategies, assertively reaching different groups of employees to prevent non-satisfaction and consequently absenteeism.

6 WORK MOTIVATION DRIVEN BY HERZBERG’S THEORY

There is in this theory the proposal of a dynamic that provides a continuous motivation through the enrichment of tasks or the position performed by the professional. The idea is to replace simple tasks with more complex ones, always taking into account the level of development of each employee and their individual skills and characteristics (HERZBERG, 2015).

This substitution can take place vertically or horizontally; the vertical replacement, the simplest tasks are eliminated and other more complex placed in its place allowing the observation of the development of the professional in their new assignments. In the horizontal form, tasks related to certain activities are eliminated and different ones are added, even if at the same degree of difficulty, (MEIRELLES, 2022) also allowing the employer to observe the professional performance of the employee in these new assignments.

This dynamic, according to Herzberg’s Theory (2015), tends to motivate employees, generating effects such as: increased productivity; reduced absenteeism; reduced turnover. However, negative effects are also likely to arise such as increased anxiety in the face of new tasks not yet very skillful due to lack of expertise; increased conflict between personal expectations and results in enriched tasks not yet very mastered by employees; feeling of exploitation and
neglect when the company does not accompany the enrichment of tasks with the enrichment of remuneration; reduction of interpersonal relationships due to greater concentration on enriched tasks (VERDASCA, 2022).

7 CONCLUSION

Absenteeism needs to be studied and reduced through strategic actions that will benefit employers and employees. The Two-Factor Theory has proven to be an effectivetechnology to help reduce absenteeism through the motivation of employees involved inthe labor system of companies.

Job satisfaction brings motivating factors that can consequently positively influence the rates of absenteeism causing your reduction, professional dissatisfaction causes a series of losses to the organization and the decrease in performance and productivity of employees. An individual who does not have their needs met, will not have the satisfaction necessary to perform their activities with quality at work.

There is a need to develop labor motivation strategies for employees to reduce absenteeism and the importance of conducting searches and more research and studies that support these actions to achieve the desired goals.

The participation of a multi-professional team can be effective in reducing absenteeism and improving productive rates for employers and employees, increasing the income of both involved in the process.
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