

**The Performance Management Development
System Working As An Extrinsic Motivator for
Employees at College X during an Economic
Downturn
(An Exploratory Case Study)**

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for my dissertation on the course BA (Hons) HRM, is entirely my own work and has not been submitted in whole or in part for assessment for any academic purpose other than in fulfilment for the dissertation that was given to me.

Signed:

Date:

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Abstract

The purpose of this piece of research was to explore how employees at this College were motivated to perform during the economic downturn. The College is part of a large Academic Organisation in the public sector with a total of four Colleges and five other supporting functions.

The Performance Management Development System (PMDS) at the Organisation was used as the unit of analysis therefore the researcher considered it necessary to explore the experiences of employees with this system.

The main research questions asked if the PMDS is working to extrinsically motivate the employees at the College during the economic downturn. Herzberg's Two-Factor Motivation Theory was used as the theoretical framework.

Research was conducted via semi-structured interviews with employees from different categories of staff at the College. A meeting was held with a Senior HR Manager where notes were taken. The PMDS falls under the auspices of this Manager's department. Archival documents were also used to gather information on the PMDS.

The research findings suggested that the employees at this College were highly intrinsically motivated. They had major demands placed on them following the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements and constantly rose to the challenge that these demands placed on them. Most of the findings concurred with Herzbergs' views that Hygiene Factors do not motivate or satisfy employees in the long-term and that Motivator Factors motivate in the long-term and provide satisfaction. One Hygiene Factor (Interpersonal Relationships) emerged strongly as a motivator that has endured and played a significant role in the lives of the employees since the downturn. This suggests that this Factor is in the wrong category and is a major motivator.

There is potential for further research on maintaining high intrinsic motivation and also implementing a new PMDS that will be an extrinsic motivator for employees.

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Abbreviations

GFC	Global Financial Crisis
HR	Human Resources
PA	Performance Appraisal
PDP	Personal Development Plan
PM	Performance Management
PMDS	Performance Management Development System
PMS	Performance Management System
PRP	Pay Related Performance
SMART	Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely
SMI	Strategic Management Initiative
TDP	Team Development Plan
T & D	Training and Development

Appendices

Appendix A – Notes from Meeting with Senior Manager

Appendix B – Interview Request to Employees

Appendix C – Set of Interview Questions

Appendix D – Interview Transcripts (Sample of each staff category: Academic, Administrative and Operations).

Background to College X

College X is part of a large academic organisation that will be referred to as Organisation X. Organisation X consists of four colleges and five supporting administrative functions. College X is a significant academic unit within Organisation X. College X provides a wide range of programmes at various levels from level six to level ten. The college also provides programmes in executive education and lifelong learning and has close links with the corporate sector. College X aims to transform and empower people in organisations including those in the actual college itself. It aspires to assist graduates in reaching their full potential and prepare them for success in the interconnected world. There are a total of five schools at College X, providing a diverse range of programmes for students in differing fields. At present there is a total of 4,126 students at the college. The college provides exemplary facilities to students aspiring to provide them with a meaningful and enjoyable experience. College X employs a diverse range of staff including academics, administrators, technicians, operations/maintenance and library staff.

Chapter One - Introduction

1.1 Dissertation Topic

The topic for this piece of research is Motivation. The research focuses on employees in a public sector organisation. The importance of motivation in all organisations has grown significantly since the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and the economic downturn that resulted from same. The significance of motivation for those in the public sector is phenomenal considering the demands placed on employees following both the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. The focus of both agreements was on cutting costs whilst improving service and efficiency. Headcount was reduced via early retirement packages and a moratorium on recruitment was introduced. Terms and conditions were gradually eroded and pay was cut whilst pressure was placed on employees to increase performance to deal with an added workload.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to understand the concept of Motivation and to identify how employees are motivated. It is important to note that motivation is unique to an individual. Factors that motivate may differ vastly from one individual to another and with this in mind Staren (2009) states that a variety of motivational approaches may be need to be used. The link between motivation and performance is widely acknowledged. If employees are not motivated it is inevitable that their performance suffers. White (2009) acknowledges the major role played by motivation in employee performance. He believes improvement in performance leads to productivity and efficiency. The Performance Management Development System (PMDS) at the organisation is the unit of analysis for this study. The study aims to determine if the PMDS is actually working as an extrinsic motivator for employees during the economic downturn.

1.3 Literature and Studies on the Topic

Much has been written on the topic of motivation and many motivation theories have evolved over the years. Theorists have focussed on the two types of motivation ;

intrinsic and extrinsic. The theories have endeavoured to understand motivation and how employees are actually motivated. The theory from the literature that was used for the theoretical framework for this piece of research was Herzberg's Two Factor Motivation Theory. Herzberg believes individuals are motivated by "Hygiene" and "Motivator" factors. Hygiene factors are extrinsic and include the likes of pay/salary, company policies and administration but to name a few. Herzberg believes these factors do not provide long-term motivation or satisfaction however they could prevent dissatisfaction in the short-term. Motivator factors relate to the intrinsic motivation of an individual, how they feel within. These factors include a sense of personal achievement, recognition, growth and development but to name a few. This research aims to identify which of Herzberg's Factors emerge as the more prominent in relation to employee motivation at this organisation. The researcher should be then in a position to determine which extrinsic and intrinsic motivators motivate the employees since the economic downturn. It must be remembered that across the public sector extrinsic rewards such as pay have been diminished significantly due to the downturn in the economy. Pressure on government to cut costs whilst reforming the public service is constant despite the on-going demands for a high quality service to the public.

The PMDS at the organisation is the unit of analysis for this piece of research. Motivation and performance are closely linked. The literature includes a section on Performance Management (PM) and Performance Management Systems (PMSs). PM is defined and the Performance Appraisal (PA) process is described in detail. The differing views on the appraisal process are referred to. Theorists have very contrasting views on the process. The management of underperformance via a PMS is outlined and the theorists' views on how best to manage underperformance using a PMS. The section finishes with detail on the possible limitations of a PMS and how these limitations can lead to the failure of the entire system.

1.4 PMDS in the Public Sector and at Organisation X

This section includes a section on PMDS in the public sector as this organisation falls within the realm of the public sector. Details are traced back to the original inception of the system in the organisation and include the developments since the

introduction of the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. These two agreements were resultant from the economic downturn and had major impact on employees at this organisation and across the public sector.

1.5 Research Design

The interpretive paradigm was adopted for this piece of research. Collis and Hussey (2009. P.57) state that the research involves an inductive process with a view to providing interpretive understanding of social phenomena within a particular content". The researcher aimed to probe the employees as to how they were motivated at work and to explore their experiences with the PMDS for the purpose of answering the main research question. Qualitative data was gathered from employees via semi-structured interviews and personal notes were also taken by the researcher. A meeting with the Senior Manager responsible for rolling out the PMDS at the organisation also took place. The purpose of this meeting was to gain a deep insight of how the system works and the various components necessary for the system to function effectively. The use of the interview as an instrument to collect the data from employees was pivotal to obtaining rich and vivid details from them based on their experiences with the PMDS and to assess how they were motivated at the workplace. Archival research was conducted using organisation documents on the PMDS. The design of the research will be further outlined in the methodology section.

1.6 Relevance of the Research and Personal Interest

Motivation has always played a role in how employees perform in the workplace. The significance and importance of employee motivation and performance have increased dramatically during the economic downturn. The economic downturn has impacted negatively on many organisations, none more so than those in the public sector in Ireland. The roar of the Celtic Tiger ceased suddenly and employees were left to pick up the trail of debris left behind. Government were desperate to locate finance in order to stabilise the economy and public sector employees bore the brunt of such desperation. The researcher, as a serving public servant, is passionate about the high levels of motivation displayed by colleagues at all levels at her organisation. High motivation levels were necessary to increase performance in order to compete

with the additional workload and extra demands placed on them since the downturn. Tangible rewards are virtually non-existent, in fact they have been gradually eroded under the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements therefore the researcher is keen to explore how and why employees remain so highly motivated and continue to increase performance levels on an on-going basis. At a time when increased performance is paramount the researcher is keen to explore the relevance of the PMDS and assess if it is working as an extrinsic motivator for employees.

1.7 Research Structure

The first chapter is composed of the Introduction section. The Introduction states the main purpose of the research and the background to the study. This chapter also describes the researcher's personal interest in the topic.

The second chapter contains the literature review. The literature review identifies the views of the theorists on the topic and some of the main theories associated with the topic will be analysed.

A section then follows on the unit of analysis for the research . The next section traces the historic background to the unit of analysis in the public sector and at the actual organisation.

The third chapter explains the methodology used and the justification for same and the research design will also be outlined.

The fourth chapter provides details from the findings including an overall summary.

Chapter five provides conclusions and recommendations for further research.

The section that follows is the literature review, containing details of the views of the various theorists on the topic and also an analysis of some of the motivational theories.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

Section 1 - Motivation

2.1 Motivation

Motivation can be described as an inherent drive or desire in a human being to accomplish a task and act in a manner that is required to achieve the task. Cinar , Bektas and Aslan (2011) speak of the importance of motivation in determining how employees perform and also how crucial highly motivated employees are to the success of an organisation. Park and Word (2012, p.707) believe motivation to be “an umbrella concept that captures psychological forces that direct, energise and maintain action”. This definition tends to imply that motivation is driven by the individual’s psychological state.

2.2 Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation can be defined as an inner-drive to perform well for many reasons beyond monetary or tangible rewards. Non-tangible rewards typically include the likes of recognition from management, a sense of achievement, but to name a few. Ledford, Gerhart and Fang (2013) believe that intrinsic motivation is derived from the task. They associate it with the task providing the employee with positive feelings. The employee feels self-fulfilled having accomplished the task at hand. Intrinsically motivated employees are normally self-driven and enjoy responsibility and use of their own initiative. They need little guidance from management. Park and Word (2012) argue that in public sector organisations the manager is a leader, who leads by example. They emphasise the reliance on intrinsic motivation in the public sector and believe that employees are intrinsically motivated by such factors as a desire to serve the interest of the public or a sense of “duty” to the public. Mc Kenna (2012) believes intrinsic motivation of the employee has far reaching benefits for the organisation however he outlines a degree of cynicism from management regarding intrinsic motivation. External factors such as tangible

rewards, organisation culture and management behaviours can affect the inner drive or desire to perform. Mc Kenna (2012) believes that post-reward (rewarding after the job is done) is very beneficial to intrinsic motivation. The culture of the organisation has major influence on the intrinsic motivation levels of employees. A positive culture is more likely to be encouraging for the employee and heighten intrinsic motivation to perform. A negative culture tends to have the opposite effect and dampen intrinsic motivation levels. Park and Word (2012) state that there is much documented on the fact that the motivation of those working in the public sector varies greatly from those working in the private sector, evidence of differing cultures affecting employee motivation. The process of PM via a PMDS aspires to function as an extrinsic motivator via objective and goal-setting, performance appraisals and the employee playing a participative role in decision making creating an inclusive culture.

2.3 Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation is the behaviour that is driven by tangible and external reward such as pay, bonuses, promotion. This type of motivation is driven by external factors that are outside the individual. Ledford, Gerhart and Fang (2013,p.17) refer to “Salary”, “benefits” and “incentives” in relation to extrinsic rewards. They feel that some employees must have a tangible reward for their performance in order to be motivated. The factors that extrinsically motivate an employee are linked to the intrinsic motivation of the individual however employees who lack intrinsic motivation are only extrinsically motivated in the short-term. Once the tangible reward ends the motivation level will inevitably plummet again. Benabou and Tirole (2003) believe rewards may be short-term and poor motivators that tend to have a negative impact when they are withdrawn. Mc Kenna (2012) states that extrinsic rewards are costly and damage morale when withdrawn. They do not foster permanent positive behaviour. PMSs at some organisations are pay-related and employees are financially rewarded for their performance. PRP tends to be more prevalent in the private sector. Park and Word (2012, p.78) believe employees in the public sector are less concerned with extrinsic rewards hence they are intrinsically motivated and more “affectively committed” by serving the community and attending to the public interest.

Total Motivation refers to one possessing the combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This could be described as the ideal combination.

2.4 Motivation Theories

Motivation theories can be divided into three different categories: Content theory, Instrumentality theory and Process theory. Cinar, Bektas and Aslan (2011) believe that content theories point out that employees are motivated by specific factors whilst process theories focus on the fact that motivation is affected by psychological forces. Process and Content theories are described in the paragraphs that follow.

2.4.1 Process Theories

Locke believes that external forces outside of the individual determine behaviour and motivation. His goal-setting theory focuses on working towards a particular goal and this goal is the motivator for the individual. He links increased performance to specific goals. He emphasises his belief that more difficult goals tend to lead to higher performance by comparison to easier more achievable goals. Latham and Pinder (2005) describe how high performance leads to high satisfaction however this high performance must be resultant from challenging goals that are supported by the organisation. Locke believes that more general goals do not achieve as much as very specific goals. The more specific the goal the higher the level of motivation to perform.

Vroom's theory (1964) consists of two elements: expectancy and valence. This theory focuses on outcomes. Vroom believes that the actions of the individual are based on expectation that a given outcome will result from the act. This theory focuses on the employee's expectancy in relation to the task at hand and how they feel they can perform such task. If the performance is of the required standard reward will be given to the employee. It emphasises the need for organisations to link rewards to performance. This theory was later developed by Porter and Lawler (1968). Porter and Lawler believe rewards could be intrinsic or extrinsic and that the individual's view on how fair and attractive the rewards are influences their motivation. Cinar, Bektas and Aslan (2011) speak of how the structure of the work

environment can lead to performance that is effective. They believe that effective performance leads to extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, leading to total job satisfaction.

2.4.2 Content Theories

Maslow's Needs Theory (1943, 1954) frequently referred to as "the hierarchy of needs" divides the needs of the individual into five tiers. The needs at the bottom tier are based on physiological needs such as food and shelter. They peak with self-actualization. Maslow believes that satisfaction at one level leads to motivation at the next level.

Theory X and Theory Y

Douglas Mc Gregor's (1960) Theory X and Theory Y are polar opposite views in relation to how managers view employees. Kopelman, Prottas and Falk (2010) believe that according to Mc Gregor's Theory X and Y the views that a manager possesses about their employees are inclined to be self-fulfilling. Those who hold a negative view akin to Theory X tend to manage lazy employees who lack intrinsic motivation. The manager who holds positive and optimistic view of his employees akin to Theory Y tends to manage employees who enjoy their work, are self-directed and highly driven.

Theory X

Theory X states that humans are lazy, resistant to change and lack drive or ambition. An authoritarian style of management prevails whereby the manager is dominant and controlling. Stewart (2010) believes Theory X Managers are preoccupied with controlling the employee. The main motivator for the employee is fear or dread of punishment. This style of management leads to a very negative and rigid culture in the organisation. The Theory X style tends to be prominent in top-heavy organisations including large bureaucracies. Employees who fall under Theory X are not very productive hence leading to an organisation that is less successful and competitive.

Theory Y

Theory Y states that humans are active, enthusiastic and very driven. Theory Y tends to reflect a more democratic approach to how humans behave at work. The importance of high levels of intrinsic motivation cannot be over-emphasised here. Schermerborn et al (cited in Carson 2006, p.458) refer to the positive impact of fair treatment of employees who are given responsibility. The most efficient way to manage them is to allow them the space to use their initiative and assume responsibility. Theory Y managers tend to build positive relations with employees. A participative style of management prevails whereby management and employee tend to work alongside each other. High trust levels are likely to prevail between managers and employees. Employees tend to be highly productive and this inevitably benefits the organisation. A positive culture prevails and such culture combined with the ethos among highly driven employee tends to lead to much success at organisation level. Stewart (2010, p.3) describes the Theory Y work environment as a “state of peace” where harmony prevails between employees and managers. He believes both sets of people are on a journey of “self-fulfillment”.

Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg (1964) developed a two-factor theory of motivation focussing on satisfiers and dis-satisfiers. Satisfiers or motivator factors are capable of motivating an individual leading to satisfaction and improved performance in the workplace. They are based on intrinsic motivation. These factors tend to lead to positive feelings and such feelings arise from job satisfaction, a desire for achievement, and an interest in or a passion for the actual work.

Dis-satisfiers or hygiene factors can alleviate or prevent job dis-satisfaction but cannot motivate an individual to improve performance. These factors are based on extrinsic motivation and factors outside of the individual. They include the environment, working conditions and pay. Herzberg believes that hygiene factors may prevent or decrease job dissatisfaction but they cannot ensure satisfaction or motivate the individual in the long-term. This implies that gains from tangible rewards such as pay increases will only satisfy the individual in the short-term.

Hygiene Factors Extrinsic Motivators, that may prevent dissatisfaction	Motivator Factors Intrinsic Motivators that may increase satisfaction and improve performance
Salary/Pay Organisation Policies Job Security Working Conditions Supervision Work/life Balance	Recognition Responsibility Opportunity for Promotion Growth and Development Interesting and Stimulating Work A Sense of Personal Achievement

Adapted by Researcher

Herzberg believes motivation is like a self-charging battery that is based on the satisfaction derived from a sense of achievement, recognition for the achievement and a sense of responsibility, personal development and growth.

Herzberg's two-factor theory is easily understood as it is based on real-life experiences as opposed to scientific or philosophical approaches. The approach emphasises the values that are intrinsic to the job and looks closely at the effects of financial and non-financial rewards. Cianr, Bektas and Aslan (2011) believe factors that intrinsically motivate an individual are superior motivators to extrinsic factors. This concurs with Herzberg's overall view. Herzberg's Two-Factor theory will be used as the theoretical framework for this piece of research.

In conclusion, many theorists have differing views on motivation however Herzberg appears to hold the most realistic view. During an economic downturn it is impossible to rely on Hygiene factors as organisations cannot afford to offer much in terms of tangible reward. Tangible reward has proven to motivate in the short-term only. This highlights the importance of the Motivator Factors. They are enduring and

are required in an era when increased performance is constantly demanded to deal with extra workloads and added pressures.

The section that follows describes Performance Management and Performance Management Systems, and includes the views of the theorists on same.

Performance Management and Performance Management Development Systems

2.5 Performance Management

2.5.1 Introduction

Performance Management (PM) is a HRM practice that aspires to encompass management of the individual, the team and the organisation. PM is an ongoing process of identifying, measuring and developing performance by linking the performance of the employee to the mission and goals of the organisation. Performance Management Systems (PMSs) are the mechanism used by many organisations to manage the performance of employees. The system is composed of various components including the PA meeting. PMS can play a major role in employee motivation.

In today's difficult economic environment PM is extremely important for management and employees alike and for the success and in some cases survival of an organisation. (Heidi Barclay 2011) and Allen Barclay (2011) note the importance of improved performance from employees during difficult economic times. They focus on the importance of leadership in order to gain increased performance from employees. They also note the human element of leadership in relation to performance. They believe increased performance gained from employees resultant from feeling valued contributes to the success and stability of the organisation.

2.5.2 Definitions of Performance Management

PM can be defined as managing your human resources in a manner that enables them to perform to their full potential and in turn enhancing the performance and success of the organisation. This is imperative now more than ever due to the bleak economic conditions and the on-going fight for survival in every sector. Armstrong and Baron (2004) define PM as a process that assists with the management of both an individual and a team that can enable the organisation achieve high levels of

performance. They note the correlation between managing the employee and organisation success.

PM is an on-going process involving education, training, coaching, mentoring and feedback. It is aimed at encouraging and developing the employee and in turn enhancing the performance of the organisation. Brudan (2010) defines PM as a code of behavior that helps with the establishment, monitoring and achievement of goals of both the individual and the organisation. This definition implies that PM is for both the good of the individual and the organisation hence a very positive process. Gruman and Sachs (2011) state that improved performance via enhanced employee engagement enables the organisation to achieve competitive advantage. These augers positively for both employee and the organisation.

There is still huge scepticism around the area of PM despite the many positive interpretations. It is frequently viewed as laborious and time-consuming, a futile exercise that is either detrimental to the employee or serves no purpose for the organisation beyond completing forms to appease senior management. Some would argue that PM can be interpreted by employees as bullying. Kaye (2012) implies that PM is a negative process that can lead to “bullying” as opposed to actually managing performance. She refers to the underperforming employee and asserts that such employees are likely to feel that setting targets, and giving warnings is a form of bullying. Sokol (cited in Baldonero et al, 2013) believes that employees and managers alike hold a negative view of PM. They feel the process is not working and consumes far too much time. It has little impact on either the individual or the organisation.

2.5.3 The Role of Performance Appraisal Process in Performance Management

George (cited in Brudan, 2010) states that appraisals historically date back to the 1800s when initiated in industry by Robert Owen. Presently, Performance appraisals (PA) are a component of an overall PMS. A strong appraisal process is at the heart of every good PMS. Each PMS should be linked to an appraisal scheme best suited to the type and culture of each organisation. The choice and suitability of an appraisal scheme can largely influence the success or failure of the entire system.

Mc Mahon (2009) notes that some organisations use a “combination” of different schemes as opposed to reliance on one particular scheme. He also states that some organisations may choose to use separate schemes for differing employee categories however one could argue that a uniform system across the organisation ensures fairness and more consistency.

The Performance Appraisal (PA) process entails a meeting between manager and employee at an agreed venue and time. The frequency of Appraisals can vary from one organisation to another. The most important aspect of this process is good communication between manager and employee. Contribution from both parties at the appraisal meeting is imperative.

The appraisal is an opportunity for management to heighten motivation levels of employees via acknowledgement of achievements and encouragement going forward. Lawler (2012) feels PA is a vital tool for effective talent management. He remarks that many commentators wish to dispose of PA however he believes even further work on PA will make it a more effective tool for managing performance in the future. He emphasises the importance of appraisals being part of a PMS that is complete. Ferndale and Kelleher (2013) outline the importance of line managers, senior management and the culture at the organisation when implementing PAs. They refer to the importance of levels of trust between employees and senior management in relation to appraisals. Nagpal (2013) states the requirement for democracy (from managers) when conducting performance appraisals. He points out that managers must seek feedback on their own performance as leaders before they attempt to offer feedback to employees.

The Performance appraisal meeting affords the employee the opportunity to reflect on past performance/achievements, future plans and goals with their line manager. Davis (2012) believes the success of appraisals is very reliant on the employee contribution. He emphasises that employee commitment will be enhanced via skills development through learning. High levels of employee commitment will lead to appraisal outcomes that are more valuable to both the employee and the organisation. Some employees may live in fear or dread of the appraisal meeting leading to

reluctance to openly communicate their views. They may feel intimidated by the appraisal process and this can often impair as opposed to enhance relations.

2.5.4 Managing Underperformance

Underperformance occurs in all organisations but can be more prevalent in certain sectors. It is the responsibility of management to address and manage underperformance. Hennessy and Finney (2010) believe that managers from organisations where underperformance is addressed in an effective manner tend to be positive leaders and have confidence in the HR processes at their respective organisations. The manner in which the manager approaches an employee in relation to underperformance is key to resolving the problem. The manager needs to possess certain skills and ability. Hennessy and Finney (2010) refer to such skills and also outline the requirement for a supportive culture at the organisation and also the necessity for clarity around processes.

In many organisations there tends to be a specified policy in relation to approaching and dealing with underperformance. Line managers are responsible for dealing with the issue. Line managers may in some cases consult with more senior management in relation to dealing with underperformance. In some instances it is all but impossible to resolve the problem if the employee is not willing to co-operate and is inadvertently supported by an organisation culture renowned for tolerating it.

Sujansky (cited in Self 2014, p.225) refers to the negative impact of underperformers on other employees and also on the organisation. Morale is damaged, other employees are overburdened, compensating for the underperformer and the organisation is not as effective. (Dennis Self ,2014) and Terry Self (2014) describe in great detail the toxic effect of retaining underperforming employees. They speak of the importance of clearly defined policies and procedures in relation to PMS. They describe the retention of such employees as a costly drain on the organisation. They conclude that the retention of underperformers will damage both the organisation and its staff emotionally and financially.

2.5.5 The Failure/Limitations of PMSs

The limitations of a PMS can sometimes lead to the failure of the entire system. Morris et al (cited in Larkin and Newman, 2013) refer to the view that many see PM and PMSs as focussing on control rather than development. This view has led to much dissatisfaction around PM and PMSs. At the outset careful consideration must be given to the most suitable design of system relevant and most beneficial to the organisation in question. The manner in which the system is implemented is also of extreme importance. Strong communication and clear information regarding the system must be imparted to all employees. This is likely to lead to employees embracing the system. High motivation levels tend to lead to both management and employee obtaining the maximum from the system. The appraisal process is the heart beat of a PMS and when this part of the system does not function properly the entire system can collapse or become a non-entity.

Regular reviewing of the system is vital to ensure the successful functioning of same and identify possible areas for improvement. Mc Mahon (2009) refers to the importance of on-going managing, monitoring and reviewing of a PMS by all parties as otherwise the system is out of sync with the ever-changing world of work. The more common flaws that tend to appear in PMSs will be discussed below.

Hostility from Management

In many cases Managers tend to be reluctant to embrace PM. Indeed some would be hostile and fearful of the system. Their reluctance and hostility is attributed to ignorance and lack of information regarding the purpose of the system. Managers at all levels should be well briefed on the purpose of PM. This can be a difficult task in large bureaucracies considering the layers of management involved. Renwick (2003) asserts that HR systems are frequently ill defined and Managers struggle with interpreting the systems due to lack of knowledge and training. Some theorists are of the belief that PM is a negative process that tends to undermine an individual's performance at work as opposed to enhancing it. Schraeder, Becton and Portis (2007) refer to the fact that appraisals can lead to tension between a manager and an employee. Often managers dread or avoid carrying out an appraisal. This attitude

towards appraisals can lead to injustice for an employee who is not rated fairly and jeopardise their chances of promotion.

Hostility from Employees

Employees should be well briefed about the PMS in place. Consultation with employees either directly or via their Trade Unions is vital to gain their trust in and acceptance of the system. Larkin and Neumann (2013) speak of the negative perceptions of employees about PM and PA. Results from their research indicate major hostility from employees who described it as arduous and rigid. They find the process to be demeaning. Such extreme negativity towards the system can hinder the prospects of it functioning efficiently and even lead to a complete system failure.

Weak Interpersonal and Interviewing Skills

Skilled Interviewers for the purpose of an Appraisal are a vital cog in the wheel of a PMS. Interviewers with poor skills can have a damning effect on the Interviewee. Davis (2012) notes that some organisations do not provide training for either managers or non-managers in how to conduct or participate at an appraisal meeting. This leads to inconsistencies. Such inconsistencies result in invalidity and loss of integrity around the entire process. Strong interpersonal and interviewing skills do not come naturally to all managers. Redman and Wilkinson (2009) believe that interviewing does not come naturally to the majority of managers. The standards of interviewing can vary from one appraiser to another and such differences can lead to injustice for employees.

Lack of Interview Information Management

The appraisal meeting is used to gather and record vital information for both employee and manager. The management of such information is key to the overall workings and success of the PMS. It is imperative that issues discussed and agreements made at the appraisal are followed up post interview. When both parties do not follow up on agreements made the consequences tend to be very negative and lead to further scepticism around the PM process. Barlow (1989) affirms that lack of follow-up fits with the widely held belief that the appraisal process is little more than “routinized recording of trivialities”. It is difficult to overcome the perception that

appraisals are simply a paper-exercise and when this mindset prevails among managers the documents are literally filed away and no further action taken rendering the process useless and void.

Davis (2012) believes that limitations have been caused by operational and strategic errors on the part of organisations. These errors can be addressed by training and learning resultant in better appraisal outcomes for both employees and organisations. He believes that the integrity of appraisal systems require improvement in order to be successful. Consistency in relation to appraisals is also vital. Frequently elements of subjectivity and bias tend to appear leading to lack of consistency and documentation in relation to appraisals is managed in an efficient manner.

In conclusion , the importance of PM and PMSs are very significant since the economic downturn however many still hold a negative perception of PMSs. Attitudes of management and staff are required to change in order to utilise a PMS to its full potential and ensure it is a mechanism to motivate employees.

The section that follows describes PMS in the public sector and describes the system in place at College X.

Performance Management in the Public Sector

History of PMDS in College X

2.6 Performance Management in the Public Sector in Ireland

PM in the public sector originates in the 1980's during the era of public sector reform. Social partnerships commenced back in the 80s and delivered a series of national agreements between government and unions in the public and civil service. Many would concur that these agreements helped regain a certain level of industrial peace and stabilise the economy again. In 1994 the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) was introduced in an attempt to modernise the civil service. A significantly comprehensive programme of change "Delivering Better Government" followed. This entailed a comprehensive programme of change in the public service. Furnham (cited in Brudan 2010, p.112) states that "PMSs were used in the 1980s and 1990s as powerful tools for change to try to bring about change in public sector culture and ethos". During the late 90s the economy began to grow and improve significantly and a total of four partnership agreements that reflected this growth and improvement followed. They included the following:

- Partnership 2000
- The Programme for Prosperity and Fairness 2003
- Sustaining Progress 2003 -2005
- Towards 2016 (a ten year agreement)

The above agreements reflected the positive state of the economy. Sustaining Progress placed a huge emphasis on increased performance via flexibility and ongoing training and development. It heralded the introduction of PMDS across the public sector. The main objective of the system was to be the mechanism to achieve these higher performance levels.

The agreement also proposed to continue rewarding public sector employees via the final two phases of the “benchmarking” process. Benchmarking was a process that was introduced by government to align/increase the pay of public servants with those in the private sector. There was strong belief at the time the public servants pay fell way short of those in the private sector. The pay increases were to be aligned to the anticipated increased performance that was to be brought about via the PMDS however a large degree of cynicism prevails in relation to this ever happening in the Public Service. Boyle (cited in Rhodes and Boyle, 2012) points out that the Irish public sector is extremely weak on implementing SMART objectives in relation to PM. This comparison was made with the US and Canada.

Following “Sustaining Progress”, “Towards 2016” was introduced and the mere duration of the agreement clearly reflected the Government’s optimism regarding the long-term future of the economy and continued industrial peace resultant from same. Regrettably all changed utterly in 2008 due to the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and the collapse of the building/property sector. This signalled the imminent termination of “Towards 2016”.

The Croke Park agreement was introduced in 2010 and outlined the various changes to the terms and conditions of public servants. The agreement also demanded drastic reduction in staffing via early retirement packages. Rhodes and Boyle (2012) outline the major HR challenges that such agreements can pose due to demands for increased performance with lesser staff. They believe there are gaps in relation to how HR measure performance and point out inconsistencies in relation to PMSs in the public sector. PMDS was introduced to all areas of the public sector and was to be the main mechanism for achieving the increased performance levels that were required under Croke Park. The system was to link pay and increments to employee performance and also address underperformance. It also aspired to identify training and development requirements. Such training and development was to increase skills and efficiency. Rhodes and Boyle (2012) display huge scepticism around the the PMDS in the public sector. They believe that the Irish public sector focuses more on the administration of performance as opposed to the management of same.

Despite all the demands for improved performance and the strengthening of the PMDS under the Croke Park agreement, further demands for increased performance were placed on public servants in the agreement that followed Croke Park. The Haddington Road agreement was introduced in July 2013 which meant that in effect Croke Park did not run its full course. The road to recovery had supposedly begun however the economy was by no means back to full health and it appeared that public servants bore the main brunt of cutbacks. The Haddington road agreement demanded further reform via longer working hours, further redeployment, increment freezing and further pay-cuts for those at higher grades. Yet again, there was huge emphasis placed on performance management with a constant focus on delivering an improved high-quality service to the public with less staff. The agreement described how PMDS would be “accelerated” in particular in relation to performance of the individual and how underperformance would be dealt with via disciplinary measures. Appraisal meetings are a vital part of any PMS. They were to be the main tool to deal with the above measures. Boyle (2013) states the benefits of appraisals in the public sector. The appraisal allows for employee involvement, provision of feedback on performance and outlines development opportunities available. He notes the importance of appraisals in relation to accountability to the public. Demands for transparency and accountability were stronger than ever following the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. The agreement emphasised the on-going strengthening of PMS. Barron (2014) notes the requirement to overhaul the PMDS in the public sector in particular in relation to dealing with underperformance. He remarks that major improvements are still required. Barron (2014,p.45) questions if the public sector is “fit for purpose” considering the huge reduction in staff numbers whilst simultaneously the demands for a high quality service to the public. This questions the success and achievements of both the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements in relation to performance in the public sector.

2.7 History of PMDS at Organisation X

PMDS was introduced to Organisation X in 2005 following the “Sustaining Progress” social partnership agreement. The system was aligned to the HEA sector. The system was implemented across the entire Organisation, including

College X and the other three colleges at the organisation. The process focussed on a combination of managing performance of employees whilst assisting them with development of skills enabling them to progress in their careers. The system provided for identification of training and development needs at the annual appraisal meeting (also referred to as the Personal Development Plan meeting – PDP). The appraisal meeting occurred on an annual basis between line managers and employee and afforded both parties the opportunity to communicate and exchange views, agree on goals and objectives. Personal Development Plans (PDPs) were agreed between line managers and employees at the appraisal meeting and these, in turn, linked to Team Development Plans (TDP). The TDPs, were, in turn, linked to the Strategic Plan of the Organisation. Various stakeholders, including Trade Unions were involved in the process.

In 2011 a review of the PMDS took place and the Joint Implementation and Monitoring Group was established. A new and stronger system that focussed on aligning the performance and development of employees with the goals and strategies of the organisation

was introduced. The objectives were to be achieved via planning, performance management and staff development. Responsibilities in relation of PMDS commenced with the President, the Directors and also the individual employees. The frequency of PA meetings changed from the original annual meeting to every two years. In relation to the employee Personal Development Plan (PDP) a new form was introduced. The new and shorter form focuses on reviewing achievements, goal setting and identifying training and development needs. As part of the revised PMDS, there was an emphasis on the Fee Support Scheme and employees in receipt of fee support are required to have an annual appraisal as opposed to a two year meeting. Funding for conference attendance for academics will be reliant on participation in the PMDS process.

In summary, the revised PMDS at Organisation X aspired to improve performance to produce an improved quality service with less employees as per the demands of the Haddington Road agreement.

The next chapter outlines the methodology used for this piece of research.

Chapter Three - Research Methodology

Methodology

Introduction to Methodology

This chapter discusses the methodology used throughout this piece of research. The main aim of this chapter is to illustrate the research process implemented by the researcher and the reasoning behind the choice of method.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Positivism

Positivism is associated with the measurement of statistics. This philosophy takes the deductive approach to research commencing with a theory regarding a topic to be narrowed down to a more specific hypotheses that is suitable for testing. Collis and Hussey (2009:p.56) note that under this research paradigm “theories provide the basis of explanation, permit the anticipation of phenomena, predict their occurrences and therefore allow them to be controlled”. Positivism is typically chosen when conducting quantitative research. Anderson (2009) states that data collected via this method can be measured and interpreted. Saunders (2009) states that the positivist philosophy is adopted by the “resources” researcher. There is a tendency to elicit more limited/rigid information when positivism is the choice of paradigm hence this was not the chosen paradigm for this piece of research. The researcher for this project wishes to extract detailed information with a degree of flexibility available to delve and probe aspiring to extract richer detail.

Interpretivism

Interpretivism aspires to provide “interpretive understanding of social phenomena within a particular context” Collis and Hussey (2009,p.57). The interpretive philosophy takes an inductive approach to research. This approach shifts from the specific to the broader theories. Specific measures are monitored and regular themes and patterns are identified.

Interpretivism aspires to lead the researcher to gain interpretive understanding. Interpretivists employ methods that intend to describe, translate and explore in order to come to terms with a meaning. According to Saunders (2009) the interpretivist philosophy is adopted by the “feelings” researcher. The intention of the researcher is to delve into the feelings, attitudes, behaviours and experiences. The research method associated with interpretivism is typically the Qualitative method. Brymen & Bell (2007) believe qualitative research produces subjective data. The researcher carries their own views and values into the research and their interpretation of their findings is influenced by their views hence leading to a large degree of subjectivity.

Interpretivism was the preferred choice of paradigm for this piece of research as the Researcher believed it to be the most appropriate for exploring how employees are motivated and to determine if the PMDS is working as an extrinsic motivator. There is much written about the topic of PM however there is limited theory written on PMDS, in particular in the context of the particular sector.

3.2 Research Design

The Research design could be described as a structure used by the researcher to conduct research. It provides guidance that assists the researcher in following the correct steps. A good research design enables the researcher to achieve their aims and objectives. Saunders (2009) notes that careful selection of a research design that is appropriate for the specific piece of research is vital. He believes that inappropriate research design will not yield the right results. Various designs can be applied to research of this nature. Creswell (2003) describes some of the methods available:

Case Study : A single or multiple entities are explored by the researcher bounded by time and activity.

Grounded Theory: The researcher aspires to use the data to generate theory and frequently uses multiple stages of data collection.

Ethnography: Observations are made by the researcher of a particular group in their natural setting. Data is then gathered from such observations.

Ethnography would be viewed as a flexible process as changes can be made as the research evolves.

Action Research: Data is collected by the researcher and the main purpose is to utilise the data to produce change in the organisation.

The researcher considered the various methodologies associated with interpretivism and decided that Grounded Theory was not suitable as the researcher did not aspire to creation of a theory.

Ethnography was unsuitable as the researcher required easy access to the participants and time constraints would not have permitted her to spend time making observations of participants at another location (their natural location). The natural location of the participants for this piece of research was the researcher's workplace.

Action Research was inappropriate as the researcher was not in a position or did not have the power to introduce or suggest "change" at her organisation.

The case study was the most suitable strategy for this piece of research as the researcher intends collecting the data via engagement with the participants in their natural location and using one single system as the unit of analysis. The design of this piece of research involves three different groups of stakeholders in the organisation.

3.3 Case Study

A Case Study was the choice of strategy for this piece of research. A single holistic case study was conducted for this piece of research as the researcher needed to explore a system (PMDS) in its totality in order to determine the answer to the main research question. The unit of analysis (the case) chosen was the Performance Management Development System (PMDS). The researcher explored the case in its totality in order to determine if it is working as an extrinsic motivator for employees. The topic was "motivation". The case study was best served by a qualitative approach as the aim/objectives required the researcher to collect vivid and rich detail from the employees in order to answer the research question.

Yin (2011) describes a case study as an empirical inquiry that

“investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context”

A single case study can be exploratory, explanatory or descriptive. This case study was exploratory as exploration was required to determine if employees were motivated in the first instance, how they were motivated and if the PMDS is extrinsically motivating them.

The case study approach commenced with examination of archival data in organisation documents such as policies and procedures pertinent to PMDS. Following the examination of such documentation a meeting was held with the Senior Manager responsible for overseeing and originally rolling out PMDS at the organisation. This enabled the researcher delve further into the details contained in the policy documents and gain clarity on such details which is vital for conducting and interpreting data collected from employees at interviews.

The second stage of the case study approach involved the researcher interviewing employees. This piece of research was exploratory hence the choice of semi-structured interviews. The researcher needed to delve into the mindsets and attitudes of employee based on real-life experiences and their experiences were described in detail transcribed from interviews.

3.4 Methods of Data Collection

Quantitative Method

Data collected using the quantitative method enables the researcher to take a logical and objective view of the problem Waters (2008). It is a more direct method where it appears easier to summarise or analyse results. This method allows for limited flexibility in relation to probing or delving to elicit further information or detail hence it was not regarded as a suitable method for this piece of research as the researcher aspired to collect rich detail and flexibility was necessary in order to do so.

Qualitative Method

The qualitative method aspires to collect data that is rich and detailed and has been defined by Saunders (2009) as all data that is non-numeric and has not been quantified. Qualitative data cannot be measured in a numerical sense. Malhotra and Birks (2003) state that qualitative research is exploratory by nature and delves into the attitudes, motivations, behaviours and concerns of people. Qualitative data, by nature, is affected by the context of the location of collection hence the importance of collecting background information to contextualise the data that is collected. Given the nature of the topic combined with the case to answer the researcher believed qualitative research best suited to this project. A qualitative approach was imperative to enable the researcher collect rich detailed information from the participants regarding their experiences. This approach was necessary to enable the researcher probe the participants and elicit as much detailed information as possible.



Triangulation of Data

Bymen and Bell (2003) believe triangulation leads to greater confidence in ones' findings. The researcher believed that by comparing the experiences and views on

differing employee categories this would provide a stronger and broader picture to the reader.

Triangulation of the data from different categories of employees supported the validity of the research. Methodological triangulation occurred via collection of data from three different staff categories and also use of different sources of data collection; interview, personal notes/self- reflection and archival research. A meeting with a Senior Manager was also used to collect data. The researcher recalled that according to Collis and Hussey (2009, p.64) “validity is the extent to which the research findings accurately reflect the phenomena under study”

Primary Data

Originally consideration was given to the distribution of a questionnaire to employee for the purpose of collecting primary data. The researcher felt employees have a tendency to disregard questionnaires and provide glib rather than honest answers. The researcher was also mindful of her desire to collect qualitative data. The first stage of data collection was to hold a meeting with the Senior Manager responsible for overseeing the PMDS process at the organisation. This provided strong background and general information on the workings of the process to the Researcher. The second stage was to conduct interviews with employees. Interviews are a far superior method for collection of rich and detailed information. Asked and Knight believe interviews focus on “data on understandings, opinions, what people remember doing, attitudes, feelings and the like, that people have in common” (cited in Collis and Hussey, 2009, p.144). This piece of research focused on exploration of employee views based on their feelings and attitudes resultant from their experiences to date hence validate the choice of interviews as a method of data collection. The interview with the Senior Manager equipped the researcher with clear and detailed knowledge that provided guidance in relation to relevant questions and areas that required exploration at interviews with employees.

Interviews

Interviews were the main method of primary data collection for this piece of research. The aim was to collect qualitative data. The interviews were conducted at

the employees' natural location (the workplace). The interviews were semi-structured and face to face. Open ended questions were asked in order to probe and delve for further information. Fischer (2002) remarks on how the interviewee has the capacity to lead the discussion in areas not originally considered by the interviewer.

This leads to more in-depth exploration of the topic producing more elaborate and richer detail. Yin (2003) believes interviews to be one of most important sources of information for a case study. Interviews took place with a total of seven employee members at a natural location. All interviewees were whole time permanent members of staff. Each category of employee has been affected by the recruitment embargo and other pressures imposed due to the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. They have experienced the demands for improvement in performance resultant from same and motivation levels of employees have played a significant role in increasing performance levels.

All interviewees were contacted in person and this was followed by an email reiterating the informal verbal discussions. Confidentiality was assured and the option of anonymity offered. Permission to record interviews was sought and the researcher also requested permission to take notes during and after the interviews. All names of participants and also that of the organisation were withheld.

Interviews were the most suited method of collecting primary data for this case study as they provided the researcher with the flexibility to explore the experiences of employees as much as possible and answers to some questions inevitably led the interviewer to ask further questions she did not originally intend to ask thus eliciting even richer detail.

A copy of the list of interview questions and also a transcript of an interview from each staff category are attached in the appendices.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was collected from theorists and other researchers/experts in the field. Other valuable sources of secondary data that were available to the researcher included documentation from the Staff Training and Development department of the organisation. This documentation included the Organisation's Explanatory

Handbook on PMDS, Annual Reports from the Joint Implementation and Monitoring Group and the PMDS Reporting Arrangements. This Staff Training and Development department are responsible for overseeing the PMDS and also organising and rolling out all training (for both management and employee) pertinent to the process.

3.5 Population and Sample

A population can be defined as a group of individuals, data or items from which a sample is taken. Bryman and Bell (2007) describe the population as the “universe of units from which the sample is to be selected”. The employees at College X are the population. Quinlan (2011) describes a sample as a small subset of a population that is representative of the population. The seven participants from the various departments at College X are a subset of the population. This is a convenience sample as it is not representative of all academics, administrators and operations employees across the organisation. All participants have considerable service at the organisation and have had experience of PMDS since the original inception of the system in 2005. The backgrounds and gender of the three academic participants vary. Two are male and the other female. One of the academics is a member of the PMDS Joint Implementation and Monitoring Group and is also heavily involved with the Trade Union that represents this category of employees. The researcher was keen to interview this participant due to his involvement with both PMDS and the Trade Union. She believed he could provide valuable and rich information. The Administrative employees work in different departments. Two are female and serving Senior Staff officers. One has sixteen years service, the other has 30 years service. The third Administrative staff member is an Assistant Staff Officer with eight years experience in the organisation. The Operations staff member is male and is a team leader. He also is a member of the PMDS Joint Implementation and Monitoring Group and is also involved with the respective Trade Union for this group of staff. He has sixteen years service. The researcher was confident that this participant would provide a diverse view at interview due to his involvement with both the PMDS Implementation Group and the Trade Union.

3.6 Analysing The Data Following Interviews

Data analysis following interviews can be a mammoth task due to the volume of information. Under the interpretive paradigm the norm is to reduce the data. Collis and Hussey (2009) believe data reduction to be the main step in analysis of qualitative data due to the huge amount of data. Data reduction is made possible by restructuring the data or detextualising the data. Data reduction takes place via division of data into suitable categories and detextualising can be achieved by summarising the data using diagrams. The data is then coded. Codes are created based on the themes that have emerged from the data collected at interviews.

Themes that emerged from the theoretical framework were identified. The creation of codes was based on these themes. Collis and Hussey (2009) state that when codes have been created, themes, ideas and phrases can be aligned to a code, then new patterns can be identified. New codes were created from themes that emerged from other sources such as the interviews and personal notes of the researcher

Each segment of data was allocated a code and hence a master list of codes was created. The data was reduced with the assistance of Excel. The views of participants were then interpreted by the researcher and with the context of the views a code was allocated to them. The codes were then collated into one Excel worksheet and the data was organised into the various themes that had emerged. These themes were related back to the main theoretical framework.

NVivo is a software that is used for coding data however it was not available to the researcher hence the decision to code by hand.

3.7 Analysis Evaluation

The researcher commenced analysing the data bearing in mind the recommendations of Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Collis and Hussey, 2009, p.182). Their recommendations emphasised four criteria for data analysis:

Credibility : correct identification and description of the subject of enquiry.

Transferability: are the findings of the research generalizable, can they be applied elsewhere.

Dependability: is the research rigorous, systematic and well documented.

Confirmability: full explanation of the research process and a 'flow' to the findings.

3.8 Limitations of the Research

The researcher is not of the view that the findings from this piece of research are reliable and valid due to the nature of the research; use of an interpretive paradigm tends to lead to low reliability and an element of subjectivity and bias can frequently prevail. The findings are based on the views of the interviewees at that point in time however should the same research be carried out with the same participants at a later date there is no guarantee they would feel the same and hold the same views and opinions.

Generalizability is possible when the results of the research are applicable elsewhere, beyond the original study. Results from positivist studies tend to be generalizable however Collis and Hussey (2009) caution that there is concern in relation to applying patterns, concepts and theories from interpretivist studies to other environments. The researcher believes the results of this piece of research are not generalizable.

Conclusion

The aim of the research was to determine if PMDS is working as an extrinsic motivator during the economic downturn. The actual question was

Is the PMDS at College X working as an extrinsic motivator for employees during an economic downturn?

The researcher aspired to probe the employees about motivation and determine how they are motivated to perform. It was also hoped to delve into their experiences with the PMDS and to determine if the system was working as an extrinsic motivator. Triangulation was used to identify differences among the three categories of staff.

The findings from the research are outlined in the chapter that follows.

Chapter Four – Findings

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore if PMDS is working as an extrinsic motivator for various categories of employees at College X during the economic downturn. The main aim was to identify if similar themes emerged in the stories of the employees in relation to how they are motivated in the workplace and if the PMDS is serving as a motivator since the downturn. The main objectives of the research were borne in mind throughout the research and these included:

To explore how employees are extrinsically motivated

To explore how employees are intrinsically motivated

To examine their experience with the PMDS to date

To determine if the PMDS is working as an extrinsic motivator during the economic downturn.

An interpretive approach was used for the purpose of replying to these questions. Qualitative data was collected for the findings of this study. The data was collected from two main sources:

A meeting was held with the Senior Manager . The PMDS falls under the auspices of this department. The purpose of the meeting was to obtain details on the origins and background of the system and the overall functioning of the system. Note taking was used to record this information.

Semi-structured interviews were held face to face with seven participants who are employees from three different staff categories at the college.

Personal notes were also taken during and after each interview to ensure all valuable and relevant data was recorded.

Triangulation was used to compare the experiences of the three different staff categories.

All participants were guaranteed anonymity therefore they will be referred to as Interviewee # (number) throughout the research.

The findings will now be discussed in detail.

4.2 Main Themes from Interviews

The researcher commenced with a meeting with the Senior Manager whose department were responsible for rolling out the PMDS at the organisation. The main purpose of this interview was to obtain background and historic information on the PMDS since its original inception in 2005. The researcher aspired to trace the origins of the system and assess how the system evolved and developed to meet with the ever changing demands in relation to performance since the economic downturn. It was necessary to gain as much detail as possible on the system in order to determine if it is extrinsically motivating employees.

Interviews were conducted with seven interviewees at the organisation. The questions at the interviews were semi-structured, as previously mentioned in the methodology section. Interviews were recorded using an Olympus digital voice recorder and the researcher transcribed each interview shortly after the interview took place when the details were relatively fresh in the researcher's mind. All interviewees were extremely receptive and very willing to discuss their experiences/ views. They were very forthcoming with information. Some demonstrated body language that indicated frustration with the PMDS however the feelings that were mainly evident about the college were very positive .They were indicative of a very positive working environment.

The interviews were underpinned by the theoretical framework. The overall research question guided the interviews. The data collected from the interviews was categorised under codes that were developed from the theoretical framework and new codes that emerged from the researchers' personal notes and the interviews.

Some themes emerged as extremely dominant from all categories of employees. Others were prominent in an individual employee category. These themes will be discussed in the chapter that follows.

4.3 Findings

The findings from the interviews were as follows:

Theme 1: Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal Relationships with Colleagues

This was an extremely dominant theme among all interviewees from each staff category.

Good relationships with colleagues had huge implications for all staff and were of major significance during the economic downturn. All categories of staff had many extra demands and responsibilities placed on them resultant from the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. It seemed the strength of their interpersonal relationships with colleagues proved immense in dealing with the extra demands. It served as a huge motivator to drive staff to increase levels of performance that were required to cope with the added demands.

Academic

Interpersonal relationships with colleagues had a major bearing on the role of academics. They emphasised how they learn from the experiences of other colleagues and also derive knowledge from each other that may be of relevance to their teaching.

“And also interestingly the interaction with colleagues is most important”,

“The exchange of experiences in conversation etc.”

“Discussing experiences with colleagues is very intrinsically motivating”

“Yes it definitely is but it’s also about my colleagues, they motivate me a lot, and we motivate each other. They are crucial in relation to my intrinsic motivation. Students and staff are important, because if you only spoke to students and had no interaction with colleagues I wouldn’t like that at all”

Administrative

Administrative staff described how the goodwill and support from colleagues enabled them to cope with all the additional work and pressures since the economic downturn. The support from colleagues seemed to be a major driving force to reach tighter deadlines with less staffing resources. Reference was also made to the exchange of experiences and learning from each other.

“You also meet colleagues on the training programmes who are in similar roles and you get to exchange experiences with them, you learn from them and they learn from you”.

“I work with a good team which also helps, we all support each other”.

“Well, where I work, we all work hard and pull together, no matter what grade you’re at. We all show a lot of goodwill and we don’t get huge salaries etc.”

Operations

The staff member from the Operations department spoke fondly of the comrade in his team and the manner in which they all assist each other in particular when preparing for major events that take place in the building. Preparation for these events brings many added pressures but with the reduction in staff numbers the extra pressure is phenomenal. It is their excellent working relationships that lend to these events still taking place and being successful events despite the huge reduction in staffing.

“My colleagues, major motivators”. “The comrade among my team is incredible, the way staff pull together to help each other out”.

Inter-personal Relationships with Students

All staff spoke fondly of their association with the students and portrayed an extremely positive picture of how they relate to the students. They derived great satisfaction from working with them and helping them in any way.

They also acknowledged great inner satisfaction from seeing students happy.

Academic

Academic staff derived great joy from student participation in class and the enthusiasm of some students. The interaction with students seemed to be a major motivator for academics. They also derived great satisfaction from witnessing students achieve their qualifications.

“Enjoy the students, their participation, contribution in class”.

“I see my students eyes light up, I’m motivated...the students get me going”.

“it gives me joy.....students and staff is important”.

Administrative

Administrative staff spoke highly of their passion for dealing with and helping the students and how a simple “thank you” from a student can mean a lot. Student acknowledgements appeared to be very motivating for employees. They also referred to their sense of duty to the students as “their public” and a constant desire to serve them in the best possible way.

“I’m intrinsically motivated by my students...I like to provide a good service to the students ...and see them happy...they often come back to the office especially to thank you and that is a major intrinsic motivator”

“I don’t feel a sense of duty to the public at large, I do to our students”.

“Id be mindful that they are our public and should have as good an experience as they can”

Operations

The Operations staff member described the great lengths his team go to in order to ensure student events such as graduation leave a positive lasting memory for students and their families. He spoke of a constant desire to serve the students in the best way possible and provide a high quality service at all times. He believed huge importance

should be attached to leaving a lasting positive impression on the minds of our students, an impression that should enhance the reputation of the organisation.

“Everyone puts massive effort in to make the occasion a success and leave a positive lasting memory on those graduating and their families”.

Inter-personal Relationships with Line Management

This theme emerged as prominent with one academic the three Administrative staff. The experiences of these employees indicated that line managers were extremely supportive and approachable.

Academic

The academic described his working relationship with his line manager as very positive. He also referred to the appraisal meeting where he felt very comfortable expressing himself to his line manager and his input was very welcome. The communication at these appraisals was two-way and very open.

“They were very open and honest, nothing intimidating and they said they were as eager to hear my views as I was theirs. I was fortunate”.

“Have a good working relationship with my line manager”.

Administrative

The Administrative staff described very positive working relationships with their line managers and very good open two-way communication. Line managers appeared receptive and supportive to staff.

“No problem expressing myself to my line manager and I have good working relationship with them”.

“We had an honest discussion, got on well with my line manager at the time”.

“Very good working relationship with my line manager”.

Theme 2: A Sense of Personal Achievement

A sense of personal achievement from dealing with students was immense among participants. Their sense of personal achievement seemed to be a major driving force to achieve high standards in their work and to provide a high quality service at all times despite the cuts in staffing and pay. They all appeared to have a great capacity to undertake added responsibilities and pressures due to the sense of personal achievement that they derived from same.

Academic

Academic staff derived great joy from the interaction with and participation of students in class. They also felt a great sense of achievement from witnessing students work hard and achieve their qualifications. It reassured them that their hard endeavours whilst working with the students paid off.

“Still you will find in every class a number of students genuinely interested in the subject, asking lots of questions and you know the whole idea of the intellectual interaction is a powerful intrinsic motivator”.

“I see my student eyes light up, I’m motivated, that’s sufficient to intrinsically motivate me, the students get me going”

“Money does not motivate me, only thing that does is what I personally get out of it”

Administrative

Administrative staff felt a great sense of personal achievement when students were happy having received their support and advice and when students took time to return to the office to specifically express their thanks. One senior staff officer felt

great sense of personal achievement from training a colleague on one of the systems in the absence of training availability from the Training department. Others spoke of their own pride and inner drive as constants in performing well and gaining a sense of personal achievement from such high performance levels. They also felt a sense of personal achievement at the realisation that they and their colleagues were dealing with an increase in workload and responsibilities with less staff. They also derived a great sense of personal achievement from meeting tighter deadlines.

“I like to provide a good service to the students and their parents and see them happy”.

“I think nowadays it’s the intrinsic motivation that’s carrying us all, our passion for our work”.

“Great intrinsic motivation from training a colleague and seeing them then use the system”.

“The organisation is relying heavily on employees being intrinsically motivated because of the lack of resources. That’s how the work is being done around here”.

“You have to have your own motivation in order to get through and have any sense of self-worth, it’s down to you”.

“It’s always something you have in yourself, I do”.

“A desire for a better job with more responsibility and better pay. It’s in me because I’m very driven as a person”.

Operations

The Operations staff member described the sense of personal achievement when major events such as Graduations were a success and ran smoothly. He described how pleasing it was to see the hard work of his team come to fruition.

“Get great satisfaction from certain achievements”.

“I get great intrinsic motivation from big events like graduation when everyone puts massive effort in to make the occasion a success and leave a positive lasting memory on those graduating and their families. They have a lasting positive memory of all our staff, of us as an organisation”.

Theme 3: Challenging and Stimulating Work

Interviewees from all staff categories expressed a great love for the actual work. The extra workload since the downturn did not appear to perturb any staff member as they all had a burning passion for the actual work and derived great enjoyment from same.

Academic

Academics stated that they had a much higher earning capacity in the private sector but choose lecturing for the love of the work, the nature of the work. They spoke of how the pay-cuts did not in any way lessen their levels of performance, in fact they had no issue with increasing performance levels in accordance with the additional workload under Croke Park and Haddington Road.

“My motivation towards the work”, “a lot of us could earn much higher monies outside but are here for the love of the job and the love of the nature of the work”

“Cutting my pay does not lessen my enthusiasm for my work” “as Herzberg would have pointed out”,

“I heard of a colleague who ventured into private practice for huge money but one thing he did say was he missed lecturing”.

“I’m teaching students..Most of them are keen to learn, whereas the job the other colleague was in was all about money, that’s not for me, I love the work”.

Administrative

Administrative staff spoke of how they enjoyed their roles despite the larger workload with less staff since the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. Their love of the work appeared to drive them in coping with all the added pressures and tighter deadlines. They spoke of the great variety in their work and the myriad of different tasks involved on a day to day basis. The work was very stimulating and challenging.

“Despite all the cuts, I enjoy my role a lot; have great variety in my work”

“the variety of work, the myriad of tasks”

“You have to double your efforts to get the same amount of work done but I enjoy the work a lot”.

Operations

The Operations staff member spoke fondly of his love for the work. This love of the work obviously enabled him and his team cope with the added pressures of a larger workload with less staff. The love of the work was a major driving force and a constant source of motivation. The bigger the challenge in relation to the size and significance of an event, the more he and his team were driven to rise to the challenge and leave a positive impact on the minds of those in attendance.

“I like my job a lot”, “big events like graduation”

Theme 4: Company Policy and Administration

Performance Management Development System (PMDS)

All interviewees described huge disappointment with the PMDS. They were extremely disillusioned with the system. They viewed it as highly bureaucratic and rigid serving little or no purpose in the organisation. They expressed frustration at the system's inability to reward good performance and sanction poor performance. They were also quick to acknowledge that management at the organisation were stifled (in relation to how they ran and managed the system) due to government constraints. The overall view of the system was extremely negative. It was described by some as a de-motivator as opposed to motivating them to improve their performance.

Academic

Academics voiced very negative opinions on the system and displayed more frustration with the bureaucracy. They were also quick to acknowledge that management had minimum control over the system due to constraints by government.

“Very disappointing”. “Nothing to do with how it was administered locally”.

“I found the process embarrassing”, “it was simply a box-ticking exercise, no rewards if I performed very well, no repercussions if you did not perform”

*“Don't have a positive view on PMDS”, “I view it as a very rigid system”,
“all about ticking boxes and being good Administrators, nothing to do with being a good manager or motivating staff”.*

“Having said that management are stifled, curtailed by the constraints of the budget imposed on them by government”.

“Not very significant, I only had two appraisal meetings, I didn't know what to expect with the first one and having had that my expectations heading into the second appraisal were quite low”.

Administrative

Administrative staff expressed similar views to academics. They had negative views on the system and felt it was futile and achieved nothing. They also displayed empathy for management having limited control over the system and believed management were also extremely disappointed with the system.

“Not good” “it is just a tick box system”

“when pay increases are not attached to the system it is of no use”. “Serves no purpose” “there are major inconsistencies in it”

“management are as disillusioned with the system as we are, they only carry out the appraisals because they have to”.

“Only thing to come out of PMDS from a tangible point of view is training”.

“Records properly kept as directed but no follow-up”.

“I have a negative view of it, because no financial reward involved”

“no real follow-up, just ticking boxes”.

“PMDS should be linked to staff motivation but there has to be a link to a reward”

Operations

The operations staff member viewed the system as a major failure and felt it served no purpose. He was a member of the steering committee for the PMDS and felt particular disappointment in relation to what the system promised to deliver and what it actually achieved.

“A huge failure, it hasn’t achieved any purposeful results”

Theme 5: Growth and Development (Training and Development)

Training and Development

Training and development seemed paramount to all staff. They all spoke about it at length and believed the training and development on offer to be excellent. They spoke highly of the quality of training and trainers. They were highly intrinsically motivated employees hence the eagerness to constantly up-skill and develop in order

to compete with the changing processes as part of public sector reform. They all valued the training and development on offer.

Academic

The academic staff members spoke very highly of the training and development department and the range and quality of courses on offer to them. One staff member referred to the fact that the Training and Development department will run a training programme that is requested by staff in relation to a particular need.

“Whatever research I conduct I need to be competent in the use of software etc. I found the Learning & Teaching centre very helpful” ,

“They will put on training requested by staff if a few express a wish for a specific program”.

“I think from a lecturing point of view I think we continue to grow and we want additional training.” ,

“The cert in education serves good purpose, bring a focus to the individual to other new ways of teaching”.

“When we do the certificate we can get more education”.

“The opportunity to think about things, or new ways to do things, new methods, and the mere existence that they are available is an extrinsic motivator”. “Some colleagues are doing major courses, like the Masters in Teaching & Learning and this is very beneficial to them”.

Administrative

The two senior staff officers spoke very favourably of the training and development on offer to staff. One senior staff officer stated the added benefits of meeting colleagues at a training course who are in similar roles and also learning from them and their experiences. The assistant staff officer felt there should be more funding available for external training courses.

*“recently did a course on change management, the trainers were very good”,
“you also meet colleagues on the training programmes who are in similar roles
and you get to exchange experiences with them, you learn from them and they
learn from you”*

*“The courses offered to us from the Training and Development unit are
excellent”.*

*“That said, the training and development department offer a great range of
courses for all staff in particular the third level courses and fee waiver facility”.*

Operations

The staff member acknowledged that there was excellent training and development available however he deplored the fact that sometimes his staff apply to go on training and cannot be released due to the staff cuts. It is imperative that a minimum number of operations staff are present at the building on Health & Safety grounds. He felt disappointed that he and his staff are sometimes deprived of availing of training and development .

*“On other instances there are times when a course of interest to more than one
staff member comes up but you are so short staffed you can’t release the staff
members. If you do release a few staff members there may not be enough staff on
H&S grounds if there was a fire evacuation or someone stuck in a lift. For
someone stuck in a lift under H&S you need a certain minimum number of staff
for that task. We always have to be mindful of the H&S of all those entering our
building”.*

Theme 6: Pay and Other benefits

Pay seemed unimportant to the three academics and two of the Administrative staff however it was a significant factor for the third administrative staff member (assistant staff officer) and for the operations staff member.

The assistant staff officer stated

“For me tangible reward such as salary increase, bonuses etc.”

The Operations staff member stated

“Have been badly hit financially. Less money, longer hours...” “It’s been devastating”.

Both staff members still seemed highly motivated despite their comments on pay, it did not appear to deter their enthusiasm in any way.

4.4 Personal Notes taken during and after each Interview

The researcher was also afforded permission from participants to take notes during and after each interview. The themes that emerged tended to be by staff category.

Themes By Staff Category

Academics

Informal Management

All three academic staff members expressed a desire to return to a more informal style of management whereby staff felt free to call to a manager without appointment for informal discussion on any issue. They believed this was the trend in the past before any PMDS was introduced and it worked very well in relation to motivating staff and good management/staff relations.

Administrative

Impact of Headcount Reduction

The impact of reduction in staffing was described by both senior staff officers. They both mentioned the increase in workloads at their respective departments, tighter deadlines and all to be completed with less staff. They referred to the abundance of goodwill from staff in achieving a lot more with less numbers.

A Sense of Duty to the Public

Both senior staff officers stated they felt a sense of duty to the public. They believed their public were the students of the organisation. They both expressed a desire to serve and assist the students in whatever way they could and provide as good a service as possible to them.

Salary, Growth & Development, Promotion

These themes all emerged very strongly from the discussion with the Assistant Staff Officer. He was much younger than his counterparts and had worked in the organisation for 8 years. He was ambitious and very driven and keen to further his education and develop his career. He also believed the public sector should be like the private sector and become competitive and engage in cost cutting to make the organisation more viable.

Operations Staff

Company Policy & Administration, Working Conditions, Opportunity for Advancement & Growth

These themes arose from the informal discussion with the Operations staff member. He felt badly affected and aggrieved by the pay cuts and general erosion of the terms and conditions of employment. Staff in his area were also at the loss of overtime which felt like an additional pay cut. Working conditions were affected by a huge loss in staff (almost 50%) which had Health & Safety implications. There is a constant necessity for a minimum number of staff in this area in the event of fire evacuation or issues concerning the lift breaking down. A minimum of three Operations staff must be present to assist with resolving a broken lift and ensuring that the person stuck in the lift is removed as speedily and safely as possible. This means that staff are sometimes denied the opportunity to avail of training and development. This can have implications for them furthering their careers.

4.5 Summary of Findings

The major themes that emerged from the interviews and personal notes were Interpersonal Relationships, A Sense of Personal Achievement, Challenging and

Stimulating Work, Company Policy and Administration, Growth and Development and Pay. These themes appeared in all staff categories however certain themes/subthemes emerged from each individual staff category.

Interpersonal relationships with colleagues and students were the two strongest themes. All staff spoke very highly of their colleagues and the manner in which they assist and support each other. They believed this was a massive factor in staff dealing with all the extra pressures and demands placed on them following the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. Goodwill was displayed in abundance as staff were forced to work longer hours for less pay, dealing with a larger workload.

Interpersonal relationships with students were of major importance to all staff. They all placed huge emphasis on helping the students. They believed it was important to see the students happy and provide a quality service to them at all times.

Interpersonal relationships with line management was a prominent theme but not as strong as that with students and colleagues. Staff valued the support from line management and welcomed the open communication that prevailed due to the positive working relations that existed.

A Sense of Personal Achievement meant a lot to all staff. They were very highly intrinsically motivated and took great pride in their work. They were all dealing with an increased workload with less staff and yet were eager to retain high standards at all times. Despite all the erosion of terms and conditions and the pay cuts they were all high performers whose sense of personal achievement drove them constantly.

Challenging and stimulating work emerged as a strong theme. Academics spoke of their love of teaching and dealing with students. They also alluded to the fact that they had far higher earning capacity in the private sector but remained in their roles due to their love of the work. Administrative staff described the pleasure they derive from the work and the great variety of tasks. They also described the pleasure they derived from dealing with students. The operations staff member spoke of his love for the work and how motivated he and his team were when preparing for major events, the extra effort expended and the satisfaction enjoyed from seeing the fruits

of their labour. They also mentioned how pleasing it was to see students happy at these events.

Growth and Development emerged strongly in the guise of Training and Development. This was very prominent and staff spoke very highly of the Training and Development department. They stated that they provided a vast amount of training and were always willing to put on extra training that might not already be on offer, should staff require it. Some referred to the high calibre of trainers.

Company policy and Administration emerged as a strong theme however it was more the frustration that staff felt that emerged. They disliked the bureaucracy that they associated with the PMDS however they were quick to point out their empathy for management who were restricted by government constraints and the fact that a lot of policy and administration at the college as part of the organisation is in place across the public sector. Job security was a subtheme of company policy. It was raised at interview by one of the senior staff officers, an academic and the assistant staff officer. The academic and the senior staff officer acknowledged the importance of job security during the current economic climate and viewed it very much as a positive. The assistant staff officer mentioned job security but viewed it in more of a negative light. He felt it provided far too much protection for employees and it was a contributing factor to the culture of underperformance that prevails in the public sector.

Pay appeared to be rather insignificant to most with the exception of the assistant staff officer and the operations staff member. The assistant staff officer was much younger than the other participants with only eight years' service at the organisation. Pay was of major importance to him as he was ambitious and keen for promotion. Pay was significant to the member of the operations staff as he and his colleagues felt they suffered more than a cut in gross pay; they also lost pay in the form of overtime.

4.6 Comparison Across Staff Categories

The most prominent theme to emerge from academics alone was the desire for a return to informal style of management. They felt this worked way in the past and was a far superior way of managing and motivating staff.

Three main themes emerged from the two senior staff officers were the impact of headcount reduction at their respective departments, the abundance of goodwill from colleagues and the sense of duty as public servants to the students, whom they viewed as their public. The assistant staff officer held separate views, he was ambitious and eager for promotion and tangible reward was paramount to him.

The main theme to emerge from the operations staff member was his extreme disappointment with the PMDS. He, as a member of the steering committee, held great optimism for the system and believed it would achieve a lot. He was also aggrieved at the financial losses suffered by those in his department resultant from the pay cuts and loss of overtime. He felt his staff were constrained by Health and Safety regulations due to the nature of their work. A minimum number of staff had to be present in the event of a fire evacuation or the lift breaking down. The staff in the area had been reduced by almost 50% following the economic downturn. This meant that in order to have the legal minimum number of staff present staff in this area were unable to avail of training and development as frequently as they might like to.

In summary, it appears that apart from the main themes that emerged from all staff , the themes unique to an individual staff category were minimum. Academics were the only group of staff to express a strong desire for an informal style of management. Administrative staff described their sense of duty to the students as their public. The youngest Administrative staff member felt passionate about pay increases, growth and development and career. Administrative and operations spoke of the huge impact of headcount reduction in their respective areas. The operations staff member felt aggrieved that his staff had suffered cuts to gross pay and also overtime. The loss of overtime was a financial loss felt by this group alone. He also was dismayed that staff in his area were sometimes denied the opportunity of attending training and development courses.

This was due to the nature of their work and the fact that on Health and Safety grounds a minimum number of staff must be present at all times for certain eventualities. This was unique to this group of staff. Both other groups of staff appeared to have no problem availing of training and development at any given time within reason.

The implications of the findings are discussed in the final chapter: Conclusions and Recommendations.

Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Purpose of the Research Recalled

The purpose of this research is to determine how employees are motivated and to assess their experiences with the PMDS at the organisation. Exploration of how staff are motivated and delving into their experience with the PMDS should enable the researcher to determine if the PMDS is working as an extrinsic motivator for employees at the organisation. The researcher aspires to determine if similar themes emerge from the individual stories and to compare themes across staff categories. At this point it is deemed appropriate to restate the main research question:

Is the PMDS at Organisation X working as an extrinsic motivator for employees during the economic downturn?

Limitations of the Research Recalled

It is important to recall the limitations of this piece of research at this point in time. The interpretive paradigm was chosen to collect qualitative data. Triangulation of data was employed by drawing comparisons across different staff categories however the use of the interpretive paradigm to collect qualitative data tends to lead to elements of subjectivity and bias leaning towards low reliability. The outcome of the interviews should, however, achieve a high level of validity if the questions posed at interview were designed in a manner that would elicit rich and detailed information.

5.2 To explore how employees are extrinsically motivated?

The researcher now aims to answer specific questions in relation to the theoretical framework. These questions are related to Herzberg's Hygiene and Motivator factors. The most dominant themes that emerged from all staff categories were Interpersonal Relationships, A Sense of Personal Achievements, Challenging and

Stimulating Work, Other Benefits (Training and Development) and Company Policy and Administration.

At this juncture the researcher considers it important to recall Herzberg's Two Factor Theory of Motivation. Herzberg believed that Hygiene Factors can prevent dissatisfaction but they do not necessarily provide satisfaction for the individual. This belief meant that Hygiene Factors do not motivate staff. On the other hand, Motivator Factors can provide satisfaction which tends to be long-term hence they are capable of motivating staff and such motivation leads to enhanced performance.

5.3 The Hygiene Factors (Extrinsic Motivation)

Based on the research findings it appears that money appeared rather insignificant to most employees, they expressed disappointment/dissatisfaction at the loss of pay since the economic downturn however it had little or no bearing on their motivation and performance levels. They had no problem with increasing performance levels to meet extra demands/pressures whilst their pay was cut. Any dissatisfaction with the pay cuts appeared to be short-lived. Money, therefore, was not a motivator. This subscribes to Herzberg's view. Good Interpersonal Relationships emerged as a significantly strong theme from the research. The relationships with colleagues and students appeared to be high motivators for staff. The relationships with colleagues was extremely dominant in a positive sense. Staff viewed this relationship as extremely motivating, the comrade appeared to be a driving force in their day to day work activities and also carried them through the huge additional workload and the various pressures and demands it placed on them. Relationships among staff were extremely positive and enduring and such strong relationships enabled them rise to almost any challenge,

Relationships with students emerged as a strong theme and seemed to be major motivators for staff in their day to day work. The relationships with students appeared to provide great sense of self achievement to staff and motivated staff to perform to high standards in order to provide a quality service to students. This concurred with the views of Park and Word (2012) who believe that public servants feel a sense of duty to the public. In this instance the students are the public for those working in college.

These relationships appeared to be strong motivators and provide long-term satisfaction to staff. These Hygiene Factors are in conflict with Herzberg's view that Hygiene Factors do not motivate or provide long term satisfaction.

Company Policy and Administration was a dominant theme in a negative sense. Staff displayed major frustration with the PMDS and the administration of the system. They viewed the system as highly bureaucratic and rigid serving little or no purpose. This concurs with the views of Larking and Newman (2013), they believe employees view PM and PA as arduous and rigid. The main purpose of the system was to manage performance and by doing so inadvertently motivate staff. Staff views on the Company Policy and Administration also fitted with Herzberg's view on Hygiene Factors. The PMDS and the manner in which it was administered was no motivator for staff and had little or no bearing on their performance. The system, in its current form, could not be used to motivate staff to improve their performance.

5.4 The Motivator Factors (Intrinsic Motivation)

A Sense of Personal Achievement was a very strong theme to emerge. This theme was extremely strong among all staff. Their sense of personal achievement was a constant in driving them to continuously increase performance levels in order to cope with additional workloads with less staff and tighter deadlines. Despite the fact that further cuts and demands emerged from the Haddington Road agreement, this did not appear to deter staff from striving to constantly increase performance levels. Their Sense of Personal Achievement drove them to deal with all the additional demands placed on them. This definitely concurs with Herzberg's view on Motivator Factors. This also is aligned to the views of Park and Word (2012) who state that public sector employees are less concerned with extrinsic rewards and are highly intrinsically motivated. The Sense of Personal Achievement improved job satisfaction for staff and constantly motivated them to increase performance to higher standards.

Challenging and Stimulating work was of significant importance to staff. They all spoke passionately and fondly of their love for the work despite the three different natures of work. The work appeared to be a huge motivator. It appeared to enable staff to quickly dismiss and forget the likes of pay cuts and general erosion of terms

and conditions since the downturn. The work provided them with such inner satisfaction that they were all capable of rising about the impositions that had been placed on them via Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements. The work enabled them to strive to improve performance and provide quality work and a quality service. The view staff held of their work was aligned with Herzberg's view on Challenging and Stimulating Work. It was a strong motivator that constantly drove and motivated them to perform.

Growth and Development emerged strongly as a theme. Training and Development seemed important to staff and they all spoke highly of the Training on offer to staff. They viewed it as important in relation to acquiring new skills, obtaining qualifications with the prospect of furthering their careers. They spoke highly of the Training and Development department and the quality of training that was available to them. This concurred with Herzberg's view.

Recognition from line management figured significantly among staff. Most spoke very positively about their working relationships with line managers and about the support they received from them. Some spoke of the good open communication at appraisal meetings whilst others alluded to a desire to revert back to informal meetings with line management as opposed to the formality of the PMDS. They stated they always felt welcome to call to speak to their line manager without any formal process in place. Employees value of recognition from line management concurs with Herzbergs' views on Motivator Factors.

5.5 PMDS as an Extrinsic Motivator and Herzberg's Hygiene Factors

PMDS falls under Company Policy and Administration, one of Herzberg's Hygiene factors. Herzberg believes the Hygiene Factors only temporarily prevent dissatisfaction but do not motivate or provide long-term satisfaction to employees. Based on the researchers' findings, PMDS is not working as an extrinsic motivator, even in the short-term, and is not providing satisfaction.

The findings that emerged from the interviews and personal notes taken indicate that the PMDS did not motivate employees and was not functioning as intended to function. Employees indicated that they did not take the system seriously hence it

achieved no meaningful purpose. This concurs with Barlow (1989) that the appraisal process is simply a “routinized recording of trivialities”. They also deplored the rigidity and bureaucracy of the system claiming it was highly inflexible and management were as disillusioned as employees were with the system. This system does not extrinsically motivate or satisfy employees. Herzberg believes Hygiene Factors do not satisfy or motivate in the long-term hence the PMDS at this organisation is aligned with Herzberg’s thinking. Employees held very negative views on the system and it did not motivate or satisfy them.

5.6 Summary

Some of the findings concur with Herzberg’s beliefs whilst others are in conflict with same. Herzberg believes that Hygiene Factors many strictly prevent dissatisfaction but they cannot motivate employees to perform. The findings indicate money does not influence how employees are motivated to perform. Employees had no financial incentives to perform, in fact, they were at the loss of pay since the downturn and yet they constantly managed to increase performance levels to meet additional workloads and demands imposed on them. Employees were dissatisfied at the loss of pay however it had no bearing on their motivation to perform. During an era of pay-cuts they were capable on increasing and improving performance levels.

The findings suggest that Interpersonal relationships (in particular with colleagues and students) have a major impact on motivating staff to perform. These interpersonal relationships have a very positive bearing on the performance and motivation of staff. These relationships fall under Herzberg’s Hygiene category and as such he believes they do not motivate in the long-term and they do not provide satisfaction, at best they prevent dissatisfaction. The findings in relation to relationships do not concur with Herzbergs’ opinions. They are very much in conflict with Herzberg’s opinion on interpersonal relationships.

The findings suggest that job security is important to some employees in the context of the economic downturn when jobs are difficult, if not impossible, to find. Employees seemed grateful to have permanent jobs however job security did not

seem to be a motivator for performing or provide job satisfaction. The gratitude of having job security temporarily prevented dissatisfaction. This was aligned to Herzberg's thinking.

Motivator factors appear very strongly among employees. The findings suggest that a sense of personal achievement is extremely important and has not only endured but been heightened throughout the economic downturn. A burning desire to perform well within employees has prevailed and there are no signs of this inner desire abating any time soon. This concurs with Herzberg's view that motivator factors motivate in the long term and provide satisfaction

Challenging and stimulating work figured strongly among employees. They spoke of their love for the actual work and the work itself appeared to be a very strong motivator, it provided immense satisfaction within the employees. The minimum length of service was eight years, all others were working in the organisation for even longer durations. The fact that they still found their work highly intrinsically motivating after such lengthy service was another clear indication that motivator factors motivate in the long term and provide satisfaction to employees. This undoubtedly concurs with Herzberg's view on Motivator factors.

Growth and Development was of major importance to employees. All employees spoke highly of the training and development department and derived great satisfaction from the training on offer and rated the facility very highly. In relation to PMDS, training and development appeared to be the only positive aspect of the system. Employees seemed keen to constantly grow and develop their skills and knowledge via the training and development on offer by the organisation. Their eagerness to continue growing and developing did not appear to wane despite their length of service at the organisation, concurring with Herzberg's view on Motivator factors.

5.7 Recommendations

The findings suggest that the employees at this organisation are highly intrinsically motivated; they enjoy responsibility and are very self-driven. They derive great sense of personal achievement from their work and have no issue with taking on the extra workload and increased pressures that resulted from Croke Park and Haddington Road. Evidence suggests that these employees are akin to Mc Gregor's Theory Y type employees however it also suggests that the PMDS at the organisation is typical of a system that manages the performance of Mc Gregor's Theory X type of employees. It is very clear that this system does not match the type of employees and the employees work ethos is actually in conflict with the system. The system needs to be altered to suit the needs of these Theory Y types of employees in order for it to be successful. A brand new system should be implemented. A system that is flexible and adapts to the requirements of Theory Y type employees is required. Further consultation and communication with both management and employees is necessary. The system must be taken seriously by both management and employees. Goals must be agreed and followed up and appraisals must be carried out on an annual basis. Increments and other types of tangible reward should be linked to the system and employees must be in a position to outline how they have enhanced their performance and extra responsibilities they have undertaken before increments are paid. Training and development needs must be identified and agreed by both parties to allow on-going development of the individual.

In summary, these employees are highly motivated and driven to perform well. They portray a very positive image of their workplace. They enjoy their work, have terrific working relations with both colleagues and local management. They are dismayed with the PMDS. Further research needs to be conducted on a system that is designed to be less bureaucratic and more flexible. The new system must adapt to the requirements of highly intrinsically motivated staff.

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Appendices

Appendix A

PMDS Meeting with Senior Manager – Wednesday 18th June 2014

A meeting took place with the HR Senior Manager on Wednesday 18th June. PMDS falls under the auspices of her department. The researcher believed a meeting where note taking was used to gather data was more appropriate than an interview as the main purpose was to gain historic/background information on the system and also the overall workings of the system. The main purpose was to gain a deep insight into the overall workings of the system and those involved in it as opposed to obtaining information/opinions re individual experiences with the system and opinions based on same.

The meeting commenced with the researcher enquiring about the origins of the system. She enquired as to what original model/models it was based on. The system was based on the model used in organisations in the UK and Irish public sector. The system was influenced by the trade unions as it was introduced via a collective bargaining agreement – Sustaining Progress. In 2005 the economy was in a healthy state and “Partnership” was very strong, prominent and influential. Industrial relations were harmonious and calm however there was a requirement to introduce a system/mechanism that yielded a return to the taxpayer (who pays the salaries of public servants). There was also a necessity for transparency and accountability to government. It was aspired to achieve same via enhanced performance, reform and modernisation that would be monitored and reviewed through the PMDS.

The researcher then enquired about the workings of the system. She was informed that it was predominantly a system based on Management By objectives (MBO). The organisation establishes a high level of strategic objectives. Team objectives such as those at school level feed into the strategic objectives and the objectives of the individual employee feed into the team objectives. The researcher was informed that the employee’s objectives are outlined in the Personal Development Plan (PDP) and the team’s objectives are stated in the Team Development Plan (TPD). They both feed into the Organisation’s Strategic plan.

At this juncture the researcher enquired about the PMDS Joint Implementation and Monitoring Group and the background to their existence and purpose of same. The Manager informed her that the PMDS Joint Implementation and Monitoring Group were in existence since PMDS was originally mainstreamed. The main purpose of the implementation group was to continue the Partnership focus on the PMDS process. A review of the system took place in 2011/12 and the Joint Implementation and Monitoring group were involved in the review. The review followed a series of Focus Groups of both management and employees. The Focus Groups identified issues that required refinement/improvement. Refinements of the system were carried out and all processes were captured in the Organisation's PMDS Explanatory Handbook. The review of the system focussed on ensuring the system was more "inclusive" and employees were more engaged and prepared to take ownership. PMDS aspired to identify the training and development requirements of employees in order to enhance their performance and further their careers. The main objectives of PMDS were outlined in the PMDS Explanatory Handbook and focussed on three main areas that included Planning, PMDS and Staff Development. Responsibilities in relation to the system were also stated. The President has overall responsibility for the process and ensuring the system functions properly. Directors are responsible for the functioning of the system at college level and for implementing TDPs and PDPs. Individual employees have responsibility in relation to their PDPs and ensuring they contribute to their respective TDPs.

The researcher then progressed to enquiring about the Performance Appraisal meeting and its significance as part of the overall process. The manager stated that the appraisal is of huge significance. The Performance Appraisal meeting is the opportunity for the manager to assess if the employee is contributing to the overall performance of the organisation. It allows the manager and employee to set targets, review same and ensure all support is in place in relation to training and development that may be required for the employee to improve their skills and develop in the future. All staff at the organisation are appraised; managers undergo formal appraisals in relation to their own roles. Performance Appraisals are conducted every two years however the frequency varies from one department to another. Some departments carry out annual appraisals. The frequency of

Performance Appraisals is at the discretion of the local director. Mandatory training is in place for appraisers, 90% of appraisers have been trained. Mandatory training is in place for appraisees and 70% of them have been trained. PDPs are discussed at PA meetings and should be followed up after the PA meeting, TDPs are also discussed and the links between PDPs and TDPs are outlined. The Manager was asked about the success of the PMDS to date and she stated she was dissatisfied with the effectiveness of the system to date. She stated there is too much paperwork involved and management hold a negative perception of the system. They view it as an extra workload but not as a means to achieving increased performance. Only 20% of staff were appraised at the organisation by June 2014.

In the context of the economic downturn the researcher questioned the impact (if any) of the Croke Park and Haddington Road agreements on PMDS. The manager informed her that a Working Group named the National PMDS group was established. She stated that the parties affiliated to this group agreed on the demands for significant improvement from employees in relation to performance and promotion and increments were to be linked to performance. A further emphasis was also placed on accountability in the public service. The National PMDS group were also charged with deciding on amendments that take into account the terms agreed under the Croke Park agreement. All national agreements were to ensure each organisation accounts for progress to the government. This is still a work-in-progress that is now including the details/terms agreed under the Haddington Road agreement.

Appendix B

Date: 31st March 2014
To:
From: Stephney Moore-Gahan
Subject: Interview Request

Dear X,

I am currently completing a dissertation for partial fulfilment of a BA (Hons) in Human Resource Management with the National College of Ireland. My dissertation topic is “Motivation” and the Performance Management System is the unit of analysis. I wish to discuss the topic with people who may have had experience with our Performance Management Development System (PMDS).

Inter views should take approximately 30 minutes and will be conducted by myself at the organisation X in room 4069.

I am requesting permission to record the interview to facilitate transcription afterwards. I am withholding the name of the organisation and I also assure anonymity to all participants in the process.

I would be very grateful if you agree to participate and would appreciate if you can confirm by return email. If you proceed with participation, I will then contact you re date and time.

Thanking you in advance of your co-operation.

Best Regards

Stephney Moore-Gahan

Appendix C

Interview Questions

1. Background information including, your role at the organisation?
2. How long have you been employed by the organisation?
3. How have the Croke Park and Haddington agreements impacted on you? Did those demands dissatisfy you greatly? (**Extrinsic Motivation**)
4. So are there any tangible rewards for taking on the extra responsibilities etc? (**Extrinsic Motivation**)
5. How do you feel you have been equipped to deal with the extra pressures? Was there anything in place at the organisation to help you deal with the extra pressures? (**Extrinsic Motivation/ PMDS**)
6. So how did you manage to increase your performance in order to deal with all the extra pressures with less staff, if there was no tangible reward? (**Intrinsic Motivation**)
7. Did PMDS assist in any way to help deal with increasing your performance to deal with the extra pressures? How would you describe your experience with the PMDS system to date? (**PMDS**)
8. Was there any part of the system that afforded you the opportunity to express your concerns, reflect on your input to date or plan ahead for the future? Did you have an annual appraisal meeting? Were follow-up on goals etc agreed at the meeting, were proper records maintained by your line manager? (**PMDS**)

9. If answer is “NO”, do you feel that if PA meetings were carried out as frequently as they should be you would benefit from them as an employee? Would you feel comfortable expressing your concerns to your line manager? Do you feel they would enhance or stifle relations between you both? **(PMDS)**
10. How do you view the Training and Development opportunities at the organisation? Would you not view it as an extrinsic reward? Is this a positive part of PMDS? Or do you feel the likes of T&D pales into insignificance during an era when your terms and conditions have been gradually eroded (including pay cuts)? **(Extrinsic Motivation)**
11. How are you driven to perform at work considering there is no tangible reward, and those that were there appear to have been cut? Do you think intrinsic motivation is important in the absence of extrinsic rewards at work? How? **(Intrinsic Motivation)**
- Do you think the sense of duty to the public as a public servant is sufficient to intrinsically motivate you? **(Intrinsic Motivation)**
12. In general, having reflected on the PMDS and extrinsic/intrinsic motivation in the context of the economic downturn and all that has resulted from same today, would you concur that PMDS is serving as an extrinsic motivator for you in the workplace at present? **(Extrinsic Motivation and PMDS)**
13. Any suggestions as to how management could extrinsically motivate staff more during this difficult economic climate? Would tweaking the PMDS or making changes to it achieve this?

Appendix D – Interview Transcripts

Interview One - Academic

1. **SMG:** Can I ask you for some background information to commence with?
Can you confirm your role in the organisation?

No.1: Senior Lecturer .

2. **SMG:** How long have they been employed by the organisation?

No.1: 31 years, more years than I care to remember.

3. **SMG:** How have the pay cuts and recruitment embargo, following Croke Park and Haddington, resultant from the economic downturn, impacted on the demands placed on you?

No.1: Have had major impact, a lot more work, longer hours, for less pay. Yes, extrinsic rewards are non-existent but I really rely on my motivation towards the work, so heavily reliant on intrinsic motivation. Having said that in academic life, the nature of the job would have always relied heavily on intrinsic motivation. It is true to say that our salaries became over-generous due to benchmarking. That said, a lot of us could earn much higher monies outside but are here for the love of the job and the love of the nature of the work.

4. **SMG:** So are there any tangible rewards for taking on the extra responsibilities and workload?

No.1: I wouldn't say so, No, expected to do more with less, our local management are very supportive but at higher level management the attitude towards us is "just do your best", deal with more students for less pay etc. Does not have a major impact on the likes of me or anyone who is here a long time but for junior lecturers, only in the system in recent years, they are under fierce pressure, lecturing an average of 19 hours a week. It's a very detrimental development in recent years, the hours they are expected to work and on a 5 year contract, with no job security, yearly contracts or 5 year contracts, and it's very demotivating for them . We will end up in a precarious position in terms of the quality of work that younger colleagues

can offer due to such precarious terms and conditions. All due to Croke Park and Haddington Road.

5. **SMG:** How do you feel you have been equipped to deal with the added pressures at work? Was there anything in place at the organisation to help you deal with the extra pressures or encourage you to increase your performance?

No.1: No nothing at all, relied on myself and my own pride and drive.

6. **SMG:** How did you manage to increase your performance in order to with the added demands and pressures with less staff and no tangible reward?

No.1: My own intrinsic motivation enabled me to do so, came from within.

7. **SMG:** Did PMDS assist you in any way, did it help motivate you, how would you describe your experience to date with the system?

No.1: I have, gone through the process twice and frankly it was very disappointing. Nothing to do with how it was administered locally, this system was introduced in 2000 in the civil service. Problem with it is its very hard to quantify what is or is not good lecturing and frankly there are few if any sanctions that can be imposed if you are not pulling your weight. Question is what is the principal role of a lecturer considering the focus is moving towards research. Easier to quantify performance of a researcher, how many publications etc.harder to quantify performance of a teacher.

SMG: What's the best way?

No.1: I do think students have a role to play in this. For a weaker student the lecturer who gives them heaps of notes and just expects those notes regurgitated in an exam a disinterested lecturer is great, he does not challenge them in any major way whereas the brighter student will want to be challenged and have more in-depth knowledge. I found the PMDS process embarrassing as both Heads of School who appraised me knew it was simply box ticking, no rewards if I performed very well, no repercussions if you did not perform. In the old days the probation was a year which was not realistic either as many's the person can keep up pretence for the duration of a year so

I would be all in favour of two to three year probation and during that period serious assessment carried out. One positive thing that came out of it was attention to training needs, that was excellent and improved my performance significantly. That said, it shouldn't be necessary to undergo a Performance Appraisal to obtain support for training etc.that should be sufficient anyway, training should be available regardless of PMDS. If I went into a class and just went through the motions with students as opposed to performing well there would be no repercussions via PMDS.

8. **SMG:** In relation to PMDS, does any aspect of that system provide you with an opportunity to sit down and communicate with your manager, and express your views etc reflect on your performance, plan ahead in relation to goals ?

No.1: Yes the appraisal part of the system however I've only had two appraisals since 2005, not sure how frequently I should have had them, that may be due to pressure on management's time etc.

SMG: With regards to those 2 appraisals, do you feel good communication prevailed and you were afforded the opportunity to express your concerns, reflect on your input to date or plan ahead for the future?

No.1: Absolutely, I was, they were both very open and honest, nothing intimidating and they said they were as eager to hear my views as I was theirs. I was fortunate,

SMG: Was there a follow-up on goals agreed at the meeting and were there proper record of the meeting maintained?

No.1: No follow up on goals agreed, proper records kept and just filed away.

9. **SMG:** Do you feel that if PA meetings were carried out as frequently as they should be you would benefit from them as an employee? Would you feel comfortable expressing your concerns to your line manager at more frequent appraisals? Do you feel they would enhance or stifle relations between you both?

No.1: Hard to say if more frequent appraisals would serve any purpose. No problem expressing myself at more frequent meetings, have a very good working relationship with my line manager.

10. **SMG:** Now you've already touched on this, the Training & Development that is offered via PMDS, how would you describe this in relation to driving you to improve your performance? or do you feel the likes of Training & Development pales into insignificance during an era when your terms and conditions have been gradually eroded (including pay cuts)?

No.1: Well Training and Development probably are extrinsic motivators, I wouldn't dismiss it, I found it very motivating, whatever research I conduct I need to be competent in use of software etc. I found the Learning and Teaching centre very helpful in giving me training in use of software and they will put on training requested by staff if a few express a wish for a specific program.

SMG: So you would be of the view that the Training & Development aspect of PMDS is very positive, very encouraging and very much an extrinsic motivator, is that correct?

No.1: Yes, absolutely.

11. **SMG:** Now you have already touched on this earlier in our discussion but I would just like to revisit the issue. You spoke of how your extrinsic rewards have been cut and eroded by both Croke Park and Haddington Road. How are you motivated to perform bearing all these cuts in mind? Is it not very difficult to maintain your performance levels if there are no tangible rewards and also those that already existed have been cut?

No.1: Well intrinsically I'm motivated by the fact that I greatly enjoy teaching the subject despite the fact that in recent years students don't seem to be as motivated as they used be and we are taking in students of a much lesser ability but still you will find in every class a number of students genuinely interested in the subject, asking lots of questions and you know the whole idea of the intellectual interaction is a powerful intrinsic motivator.

I went into teaching because I really enjoy it and enjoy the students. Their participation, contribution in class etc. And also interestingly the interaction with colleagues is most important. Interestingly there was someone who was retiring recently, said something very interesting, that interaction with colleagues was what he would miss the most. The exchange of experiences in conversation etc.

SMG: Do you think intrinsic motivation is important in the absence of extrinsic rewards at work? How?

No.1: Absolutely, very much so, it's keeping us all going. I feel the emphasis on research has been favoured though; some are excellent researchers and not good lecturers. Perhaps we should simply accept that and have some employees dedicated to research and others teaching. People whose primary job is research and are only required to do a small amount of lecturing. Then there are others who are gifted teachers, perhaps they should be permitted to teach a lot and not do research as that may not be their skill. Some academics are highly motivated by actually teaching and others are driven by their passion for research.

SMG: Do you think the sense of duty to the public as a public servant is sufficient to intrinsically motivate you? Would you concur with that, would you be of that view yourself?

No.1: I would but I think that that is a very idealistic view, most people end up in public service because it's a job they happen to get and it happens to be available to them. I read something once that was most disturbing, in relation to motivation. It appears that people who have been more than ten years in a job (with the exception of creative artists and researchers, scientists) but leaving those aside, everybody else felt the intrinsic motivation had shrunk greatly, what management call the hygiene factors. For example, some days they have nice scones downstairs and something as simple as this would lift my mood therefore it's very idealistic to say that a duty to serve the public service is what solely motivates public servants. It may be a factor when

people start or when they get to the top but for most public servants it's the extrinsic matters that matter, to ignore them would be very foolish.

12. **SMG:** In general, having reflected on the PMDS and extrinsic and intrinsic motivation in the context of the economic downturn and also all that has resulted from same today; how do you feel about PMDS working as an extrinsic motivator?

No.1: Not in its current form but yes it could in the future if the system was fundamentally rethought.

13. **SMG:** Any suggestions as to how management could improve the system in order to increase staff motivation levels?

No.1: Staff have to feel there is some sort of reward (not necessarily a pay increase) but chance of promotion, a chance to do research, time off via a reduced timetable to do research. All kinds of other things even within the constraints. It has to be seen that good performance is rewarded and bad performance is addressed, that certainly has not been happening.

SMG: Whereas am I correct in thinking you feel if you got back to basics in relation to how to motivate staff it might be of far more benefit to everyone, rather than use of a specific system, treating them well, being fair etc.?

No.1: Yes absolutely. More informal style of management, less formality. – It's too bureaucratic.

Interview No.3 - Administrative

1. **SMG:** Can I just get some background information, your grade and department?

No.3: Senior staff officer.

2. **SMG:** How long have they been employed by the organisation?

No.3:30 years.

3. **SMG:** How have the Croke Park and Haddington agreements impacted on you? Did those demands dissatisfy you greatly?

No.3: No tangible reward to motivate me anymore due to Croke Park and Haddington.

SMG: How have the pay cuts and recruitment embargo impacted on the demands placed on you?

Yes, staff cuts are the biggest issue for me and the impact it has had on our department. The impact is huge during the pressure period. I find the cuts in staffing plus the extra workload to be a de-motivator at times. Despite all the cuts I enjoy my role a lot, have great variety in my work. My favourite task has to be dealing with the students or perspective students. Dealing with students is a huge part of my remit. It's not about money anymore therefore you'd have to enjoy the actual job as I do. The job has changed a lot since the economic downturn. We now open through lunchtime, we have a staff roster and we will eventually be opening for longer hours, most likely 8am to 6pm. The proposed merger with two other organisations will impose even more work and further changes. There will be different ways of doing things. Some responsibilities from the International office and the Admissions office have been devolved to Student Services. This has increased the workload too.

4. **SMG:** So are there any tangible rewards for taking on the extra responsibilities etc?

No.3: No, definitely not.

5. **SMG:** How do you feel you have been equipped to deal with the extra pressures? Was there anything in place at the organisation to help you deal with the extra pressures?

No.3: Nothing in place, no system. Just had to get on with it.

6. **SMG:** So how did you manage to increase your performance in order to deal with all the extra pressures with less staff, if there was no tangible reward?

NO.3: My own inner drive, my sense of pride in my work.

7. **SMG:** Did PMDS assist in any way to help deal with increasing your performance to deal with the extra pressures? How would you describe your experience with the PMDS system to date?

No.3: I think PMDS has failed as a system, hasn't worked, and hasn't served any purpose at all. It's strictly an Administrative function. Not good, I don't mean it as any reflection on anything but it is just a tick box system. It's not like a private company where you have pay related performance. That's a motivator but when pay increases are not attached to the system it's of no use. Serves no purpose, and there are major inconsistencies in it.

8. **SMG:** Was there any part of the system that afforded you the opportunity to express your concerns, reflect on your input to date or plan ahead for the future? Did you have an annual appraisal meeting? Were follow-up on goals etc agreed at the meeting, were proper records maintained by your line manager?

No.3:No I haven't had regular PA meetings. My last one was last year, I'd say I've had two, maybe three appraisals since the system came in in 2005. Management are as disillusioned with the system as we are, they only carry out the appraisals because they have to. There were records kept but just locked in a drawer and never touched again.

9. **SMG:** Do you feel that if PA meetings were carried out as frequently as they should be you would benefit from them as an employee? Would you feel

comfortable expressing your concerns to your line manager at more frequent appraisals? Do you feel they would enhance or stifle relations between you both?

No.3: I don't think more frequent appraisals would achieve anything for me as an employee, it's just a formality where there is no financial gain or other extrinsic reward attached to it. There's no reward for us who perform very well and no sanction for those who don't perform well. I could express myself but I knew that was it, there would be no follow up and there wasn't. Nobody challenged my views at the meeting. No problem expressing myself to my line manager and I have good working relationship with them, therefore it didn't affect the relationship in any way. The line manager is given a set of standard questions to ask and he can't deviate from this set of questions. It leaves the line manager very restricted in what they can ask, no flexibility. The outcome of the appraisal is therefore very restricted due to the formal format of questioning. You're not supposed to ask anything outside the set of questions. Too rigid. A very controlled process. It's not a genuine process at all.

10. **SMG:** How do you view the Training and Development opportunities at the organisation? Is this a positive part of PMDS? How would you describe this in relation to driving you to increase your performance? Or do you feel the likes of T&D pales into insignificance during an era when your terms and conditions have been gradually eroded (including pay cuts)?

No.3: Yes I would view Training & Development to be an extrinsic motivator, especially since the downturn. I recently did a course on change management, trainers were very good. Also did one in interviewing skills and a management course. You also meet colleagues on the training programmes who are in similar roles and you get to exchange experiences with them, you learn from them and they learn from you. I consider training and development very important and no, it does not pale into insignificance during the current downturn. It's a very positive extrinsic motivator. The courses offered to us from the Training and Development unit are excellent.

11. **SMG:** How are you driven to perform at work considering there is no tangible reward, and those that were there appear to have been cut? Do you think intrinsic motivation is important in the absence of extrinsic rewards at work? How?

No.3: I'm intrinsically motivated by my students, I like to provide a good service to the students and their parents and see them happy. I would often have to give them advice on the likes of loans, grants and other matters. I derive great intrinsic motivation from helping our students. They often come back to the office especially to thank you and this is a major intrinsic motivator. I think nowadays it's the intrinsic motivation that's carrying us all, our passion for our work. I work with a good team which also helps, we all support each other. I also have a good relationship with management here, they are very supportive, and that's an intrinsic motivator. Sometimes I might have to informally train a staff member in on a new package if training is not available in the package at that point in time, great intrinsic motivation from training a colleague and seeing them then use the system. The variety of work, the myriad of tasks, is very intrinsically motivating.

SMG: Do you think intrinsic motivation is important in the absence of extrinsic rewards at work?

No.3: Yes intrinsic motivation in the absence of extrinsic rewards is very important.

SMG: Do you as a public servant feel a sense of duty to the public?

No.3: I don't feel a sense of duty to the public at large, I do to our students, and they are our public. I feel the public at large have a very negative perception of public and civil servants. They think we have huge salaries, we do very little, have huge pensions etc and that's not the reality.

SMG: Why do you say that?

No.3: Well, where I work, we all work hard and pull together, no matter what grade you're at. We all show a lot of goodwill and we don't get huge salaries etc. We all get the bad publicity for a few in the sector.

We have all moved with the times here, kept up with the new processes including what was asked of us under Croke Park and Haddington so I don't like the fact that the public still have a negative view of us.

12. **SMG:** In general, having reflected on the PMDS and extrinsic/intrinsic motivation in the context of the economic downturn and all that has resulted from same today, would you concur that PMDS is serving as an extrinsic motivator for you in the workplace at present?

No.3: No, PMDS is not an extrinsic motivator for me; it never has and in its current form, never will be.

13. **SMG:** Any suggestions as to how management could extrinsically motivate staff more during this difficult economic climate? Would tweaking the PMDS or making changes to it achieve this?

No.3: If they want it to become an extrinsic motivator they need to implement a brand new PMDS. If they want the system to provide results they must tie it into some form of reward to extrinsically motivate people. The system needs a lot more flexibility.

Interview No.7 - Operations

1. **SMG:**Can I ask you for some background information, what department you work in?

No.7: I work at the Operations department.

2. **SMG:** How long have they been employed by the organisation?

No. 7: 16 years.

3. **SMG:** How have the Croke Park and Haddington agreements impacted on you? Did those demands dissatisfy you greatly?

No.7:All our gains have been removed from us. Have been badly hit financially. Less money, longer hours and less people to do it. Yea it's been devastating, our staff cut by almost 50% via early retirements and moratorium. Volume of work far higher and demands on staff are terrible. We then end up in conflict with people because it's now becoming difficult to provide the first class service that we once provided to meet the true requirements of people.

4. **SMG:** So are there any tangible rewards for taking on the extra responsibilities etc?

No. 7: No., nothing at all, just more for less in terms of work.

5. **SMG:** How do you feel you have been equipped to deal with the extra pressures? Did the PMDS help in any regard?

No.7: Absolutely not.

6. **SMG:** So how did you manage to increase your performance in order to deal with all the extra pressures with less staff?

No.7: I like my job a lot, get great satisfaction from certain achievements. Also know that colleagues in other categories (Administrative, academics) who are the same give it everything. The comrade among my team is incredible, the way staff pull together to help each other out.

7. **SMG:** How would you describe your experience with the PMDS system to date?

No.7: I'm on the steering committee of PMDS, from its early inception it's just been an abject failure. In the early days it was just a paper exercise. People were paid their national wage agreements by just ticking boxes. It was a charade and both management and unions and indeed staff knew this. They all went along with it because at the end of the day you got your increase. Phase II of PMDS took off in a hail of glory, was coming from the top down from the president and it would filter down to the ordinary worker. Whole idea was everything was worked to the Strategic plan commencing with PDPs , then TDPs but many have not got off the first rung on the ladder by doing a PDP, let alone a TDP. The new system was filled with great hope and staff would take on extra responsibilities where it would be purposeful, take on extra learning and training and eventually get promoted. Just seems like a paper exercise for the minister and the government. He is promoting the public service and implying to the general public that the system is being used to deal with staff and improve them.

8. **SMG:** Was there any part of the PMDS that afforded you the opportunity to express your concerns, reflect on your input or plan ahead for the future? Did you have an annual appraisal meeting? Were follow up goals agreed at the appraisal meeting and were proper records maintained by your manager?

No.7: My line manager has never asked me to do a PDP or attend an appraisal meeting; my team has never done a TDP. Nothing has moved forward. I've had no appraisal meeting, not one. I deliberately didn't suggest having a PDP and an appraisal because management assured us they were taking control of the system and starting at the top.

9. **SMG:** Do you feel that if PA meetings were carried out as frequently as they should be you would benefit from them as an employee? Would you feel comfortable expressing your concerns to your line manager? Do you feel they would enhance or stifle relations between you both?

No.7: No don't think there would be any benefit having frequent appraisals. I'd have no problem with meeting my line manager for an appraisal. That's only thanks to my own confidence in my ability to express myself etc. However I'm not sure if you are aware of this but for an employee who didn't feel comfortable having an appraisal with their line manager there is a facility to request that a different line manager conducts the appraisal but no I'd have no problem with my line manager.

10. **SMG:** How do you view the Training and Development opportunities at the organisation? Is this a positive aspect of PMDS? How would you describe T&D in relation to driving you to increase your performance, or do you feel the likes of T&D pales into insignificance during an era when all your terms and conditions have been eroded?

No.7: Well there's a couple of things, on the positive side if you have faith in PMDS you would believe that the T&D would equip you with tools to move forward in your career. On the other side, a lot of the training courses that are offered are mandatory under H&S, by law they must be done. Also there were other incidences where staff applied for courses and there wasn't enough people applied to do the course to make it viable. Also there are times when courses are run during the summer when staff are on holidays. On other instances there are times when a course of interest to more than one staff member comes up but you are so short staffed you can't release the staff members. If you do release a few staff members there may not be enough staff on H&S grounds, if there was a fire evacuation or someone stuck in a lift. For someone stuck in a lift under H&S you need a certain minimum number of staff for that task. We always have to be mindful of the H&S of all those entering our building.

11. **SMG:** How are you driven to perform at work nowadays considering there are no tangible rewards anymore and those that were present have been cut? Do you think intrinsic motivation is important in the absence of extrinsic rewards at work? How?

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I get great intrinsic motivation from big events like graduation when everyone puts massive effort in to make the occasion a success and leave a positive lasting memory on those graduating and their families. They have a lasting positive memory of all our staff, of us as an organisation and they will go then and recommend our organisation to others thanks to the good positive experience they have on such a significant day in their lives. Yes intrinsic motivation is more important than ever now however the erosion of our terms and conditions have been terrible, so extreme.

12. **SMG:** In general, having reflected on the PMDS and extrinsic/intrinsic motivation in the context of the economic downturn and all that has resulted from same today, would you concur that PMDS is serving as an extrinsic motivator for you in the workplace at present?

No.7: No, it's a no-no, it's all about appeasing government. The system has been a huge failure.

13. **SMG:** Any suggestions as to how management could extrinsically motivate staff more during this difficult economic climate? Would tweaking the PMDS or making changes to it achieve this?

No.7: Suggestions – we are all strangled by the bureaucratic system at present, as in the public sector and those two agreements. In fairness to management, they are doing their best too but they are extremely restricted now in what they can do for staff . They are stifled by government. Moratorium most detrimental of all. Totally stifled. Some people have used and abused our PMDS in terms of former staff who availed of great training opportunities , got great qualifications and then departed the organisation. Something has to be done about that, that's abuse of the organisation. It should be a case that if the organisation provide you with a qualification that they pay for is at a cost to them (fee waiver or otherwise) you must remain

with the organisation and give something back for X amount of time. Happens in other organisations. It's annoying for loyal staff. More negatives than positives to PMDS. The balance has to be rectified.