The Impact of Motivational Processes on Individual Performance

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Abstract

The paradox of motivation is explored. Emphasis is placed on a contingency framework evaluating which organizations are likely to benefit from motivational processes (i.e., intrinsic-extrinsic rewards) and which are more likely to pursue them. Drawing on the positive organizational behavior literature (social learning theory) and self-determination theory, we formulate a contingency that provides a platform for motivational processes: extrinsic motivation versus intrinsic motivation. In addition, we formulate three propositions that can be empirically tested. By focusing on individual productivity and performance coupled with individual motivation, we provide a model that can predict the positive and negative effects of motivational processes. We suspect that motivational processes are paradoxically most used by organizations that are least prepared for motivational consequences (i.e., outside forces) to individual productivity and performance. We offer a new term for using the right amount of extrinsic-intrinsic rewards called the "*Sweet Spot.*"

Keywords: Individual Performance, Motivational Processes, Extrinsic-Intrinsic Rewards, Positive Organizational Behavior.

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Introduction

As highlighted by a number of management scholars, most of a person's everyday life is determined not by their conscious intentions and deliberate choices but by mental processes that are put into motion by features of the environment that operate outside of conscious awareness and guidance (Bargh and Chartrand, 1999, p. 462; Parlour, 1971, p. 341; Deci and Ryan, 2001, Mega, Gigerenzer and Volz, 2015). Organizations can use positive organizational behavior to increase motivation in a highly competitive environment (Avolio and Luthans, 2006; Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003). Although individual productivity and performance may not be a direct result of the pursuit of motivational processes, managers must create an environment that speaks to individual needs and to the psychology of large groups that move toward the same direction.

The process of motivating people is not as easy to manifest as it is presented by classical motivational models, thus requiring new models necessary to bridge this divide (i.e., Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio, 2007; Stephens, 2018). Need-based approaches to motivation, like Maslow's, that focus on individual differences have almost disappeared in the literature (Mitchell, 1982, p. 80). Along with the need for new models of motivation, it has also been found that manager performance when running organizations is not as good as it should be (Mintzberg, 1990). Furthermore, how well a manager will perform on the job cannot be predicted by the number of degrees that he or she holds, the grades he/she receives in school, or the formal management education programs that were attended (Livingston, 1971, p. 2). This may be the reason why employees feel that they are out of options and that their managers have little incentive

to make their work lives more meaningful (Lencioni, 2009; Kropp and McRae, 2022). An indication of this was reported in a USA Today Gallup Poll that a majority of people in the United States lack enthusiasm. There has been exhaustive academic research trying to find out what motivates workers, with little to no evidence that spending money on motivation by organizations makes any difference (Jones, 2001, p. 1).

Self-determination theory (i.e., Gagne and Deci, 2005) suggests that employees will perceive that they have a choice when a task is either intrinsically motivating because of its inherent characteristics or extrinsically motivating because of its instrumentality for achieving self-selected goals. Thus, scholars have posited that intrinsic rewards may be perceived by employees as more exciting than extrinsic rewards (Thomas and Tyman, 1993; Manzoor, Wei, and Asif, 2021), but when an employee does not identify with a task and engages in it only to secure external validation, the employee experiences the task as controlling (Richardson and Taylor, 2012; Tiwari and Lenka, 2020). Tasks that are considered controlled by an employee may drive the opposing behavior to the person maintaining the control of behavior as is in the case of intrinsic rewards.

While some leaders preach that engagement, pride, and living good values lead to more motivated people, better performance, and ultimately better organizational results (Dewhurst, 2009; Manzoor, Wei, and Asif, 2021), explaining why people do what they do at work has been the goal of behavioral scientists for nearly 100 years (Barrick, Mount, and Li, 2013, p.132). Categorizing these rewards may be due to imprecise specification of outcomes rather than to weaknesses inherent in the intrinsic-extrinsic dichotomy (Brief and Addag, 1977, p. 498). In strong and constrained situations, extrinsic

rewards or threats can overpower individual differences and the intrinsic rewards associated with pursuing meaningful socially satisfying work (Barrick, Mount, and Li, p. 139). Thus, it is not easy to find a motivational process that can be tailored to a group of people in the workplace in order to reward them appropriately. The selection of rewards for employee work effort may be further exhausted when a manager is attempting to administer rewards (i.e., intrinsic-extrinsic) as motivational processes to increase employee productivity.

During turbulent times, society's uncertainty climbs, and they hunger for meaning and direction. They are seeking someone who has a clear vision and communicates a clear message (Quinn, 1996, p. 196). Two well-known topics discussed often in Organizational Behavior in relation to motivational processes are Extrinsic-Intrinsic motivation. Our primary purpose in this paper is to advance the understanding of individual productivity and performance by investigating the effects of motivational processes to increase employee productivity. This paper addresses Extrinsic-Intrinsic motivation and attempts to show how they are used as motivational processes in organizations.

One attempt to reach the multitudes of managers in the workplace is to offer them theoretically sound and effective research that can be implemented quickly and efficiently. Scholars can provide a needs analysis of an organization, address motivational issues in real time, and summarize theoretical applications so that managers can implement them quickly and effectively.

This paper looks at the background of motivation processes as they relate to extrinsic-intrinsic rewards used to increase employee productivity. New directions for research and practice are proposed that build upon new models of motivation (i.e., positive organizational behavior). Theoretically grounded models (i.e., social learning theory and self-determination theory), are illuminated to provide a contingency model that is indicative of extrinsic and intrinsic motivational processes in the workplace.

Background
Many practitioners describe motivation as the degree to which an individual attempts to accomplish a goal because of some incentive (Provitera, 2013). The dictionary definition describes motivation as a motivating force, stimulus, or influence. Scholars of motivation suggest that motivation is a process of governing choices by persons among alternative forms of voluntary activity (Vroom, 1964; Kuranchie-Mensah and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016); motivation explains why people behave the way they do (George & Jones, 2009; Slabbinck and Van Witteloostuijn, 2020) in a specific, goal-directed manner (LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004; Hofer, Busch and Schneider, 2015) with direction and intensity (Dunham, 2004; Kim et al., 2013).

Because of this wide spectrum of definitions of motivation, we provide both classical and extant definitions from both academic and popular press. For example, classical motivational definitions provide both depth and breadth while the extant motivational definitions are more anecdotal. Vroom (1964) suggested that performance can be thought of as a function of motivation and ability [$p = f (M * A)$]. Building upon Vroom's model, Hellriegel and Slocum (2011) state that according to the principle stated above, no task can be performed

successfully unless a person has the ability to do so.

Another classical motivational scholar, Abraham Maslow (1943a) created a hierarchy of needs theory that depicted a pyramid consisting of five levels, the bottom of the pyramid grouped together as lower-level needs and the top level grouped together as growth needs. He posited that lower-level needs must be satisfied before higher needs can be considered important to a person. He also felt that people could not move to the next level until they satisfied the need on the current level in which they find themselves at any given point in time. This idea of the origin of achievement and autonomy was first posited by Murray (1938) who identified achievement and autonomy as psychological needs. Murray was a mentor to Maslow, who in 1943a suggested that people have an innate need for what Goldstein (1939) termed "Self-Actualization." Self-actualization, at that time, became a word that both academics and practitioners embraced. The term self-actualization is still very popular today by the popular press (Provitera, 2013). However, the popular press, lacking rigor in research, has also been attributed to some factors of the self-help literature on motivation. Scholars such as Newstrom (2002), argue that such terms in books have one distinguishing feature---readers can recite their major conclusions or recommendations in a few words (p.53).

While the classical theorists attempted to pave the way for motivational research, contemporary scholars, and Maslow himself, found flaws in theoretical application in the workplace. While classical scholars such as Maslow provided a popular theory of human motivation, scholars have argued that Maslow's schema fails the test of a good theoretical foundation (Hall and Nougaim,

1968; Lawler and Suttle, 1972; Kenrick et al., 2010). Moreover, while Maslow's theory offers an appealing intuitive, logical, and interesting explanation of human-motivated behavior, the theory as articulated does not appear to be testable. For example, Maslow failed to provide sufficient insight into many different facets of his theory, such as when and where food and water satisfy a physiological as opposed to a safety need when growth and development fulfill the esteem as opposed to the self-actualization need, and where the divide is between social and self-esteem needs. Furthermore, he failed to provide an exact conceptual definition of self-actualization (Pierce and Bell, 2011; Caraccio, 2017).

Scholars have maintained that Maslow's explanations and conclusions are not considered valid even after sixty years of further research. For example, Cullen (1997) argues that "Maslow's theory is based on research which is no longer considered valid by the discipline in which it was done" (p. 355). Even Maslow himself cautioned against the rigid application of the hierarchical approach and cites several reasons why the hierarchy might not work. For example, Maslow cautioned that focusing on extrinsic factors such as culture, the environment, the situation, or the field suggested a humanistic [as opposed to a scholarly view] view of motivation (Maslow, 1943a, 1943b, 1970). Ergo, scholars suggest that Maslow's theory might not be adequate as a theory of work motivation because of the lack of operational definitions for the industrial situation (Barling, 1977, p. 18). Therefore, the Academy of Management scholars reclassify Maslow's Theory as a model (Provitera, 2013).

Herzberg (1959) and Alderfer (1972) agreed with Maslow that the succession-progression

process is relevant, but added new concepts that Maslow did not consider (Naumann & Jackson, 1999). For example, Alderfer (1972) contended that a frustration-regression process is also an important factor of motivation. This is an important finding because as organizations pursue motivation processes, individuals may experience what Alderfer calls "frustration-regression" if people perceive that the organization is not meeting their needs. He categorized his hierarchy into what he termed the ERG theory (Existence, Relatedness, and Growth). His biggest contribution to need theory, however, is his frustration-regression contribution, which describes that when needs are not met in the higher category, then, according to his research, people focus on the lower-level category.

Consistent with the early stage of conceptual development, motivational processes have been precisely defined, yet the term has not been consistently used within prior research. Even so, early definitions provide an impetus for motivational guidance and formulation. The shift, however, has been away from the classical motivational definitions and more toward the motivational scholar contemporary definitions found in the organizational behavior discipline. Most recently, the scholars of the Academy of Management posit a new movement in motivational scholarship: positive organizational behavior.

Positive Organizational Behavior
Psychological capital is a more recent motivational premise and provides a more theoretically grounded approach to motivating people. Thus, the theoretical framework and construct have initiated a wide body of research for the study of motivational processes. Luthans, Youssef,

and Avolio, (2007) define psychological capital in the following manner:

> *Psychological capital is an individual's positive psychological state of development and is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self-efficacy) to take on and put the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resiliency) to attain success.*

Extensions are made to appeal to the organizational behavior discipline, which builds upon psychological capital. This extension is also posited by Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007), and is called Positive Organizational Behavior. Positive Organizational Behavior focuses more on the performance improvement of individuals. The criterion for positive organizational behavior is based upon enhancing what is right instead of sustaining an average performance for a reasonable period of time by reducing that which is wrong. "Average performance is no longer adequate for sustainability in today's highly competitive environment (Avolio and Luthans, 2006; Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; Shuffler et al., 2018).

New models of motivation, however, have indicated that some people may be consumed with ego gratification as their dominant theme: for them, life becomes an incessant quest for more and more personal glory and gratification (Cavalier, 2000, p.63). These individuals soak up as much pleasure and achieve as much power as

possible in order to satisfy their own egos. Hence, Cavalier delineated (2000, p. 63):

>*One need not be an Adolph Hitler or an Al Capone to be an ego-gratified person; sometimes very average people are marked as cunning, ruthless, or have an inordinate need for pleasure that clearly characterizes them as ego-gratified people. They see no point in honesty or in charity. For them, all intellectuals are 'eggheads,' all artists are 'flakes,' and all clergy are 'stupid.' It must be understood that ego gratification is true for all of us to some extent. The question is not the presence of ego gratification but rather its dominance and its intensity. The human ego needs a certain degree of reassurance and recognition to function successfully. Abraham Maslow's theory of motivation places ego esteem at the fourth (next to the highest) level in his hierarchy of motives. For Maslow, it is not until the individual achieves self-esteem in the form of a personal sense of competence and recognition for one's achievements that the person can move to self-actualization. So, we should not regard ego gratification as something to be avoided. Quite the contrary, it is natural to enjoy a certain degree of praise and recognition. A pat on the back does us all good. The issue is one of degree and reeducation when ego gratification becomes the be-all and end-all of existence. The Latin poet Horace gave us the following advice: 'modus in rebus' --- moderation in all things.*

As we develop our proposition for motivational processes, the concept of ego-gratification may be related to ascertaining extrinsic rewards as opposed to individuals seeking or feeling satisfied by intrinsic rewards. Ergo, the next section of this paper will draw upon the distinctions between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation.

Extrinsic-Intrinsic Rewards

Extrinsic and intrinsic terms have received frequent use in the field of organizational behavior, but the distinction between them remains unclear (Broedling, 1976; Di Domenico and Ryan, 2017). Broedling (1976) adds that "If the extrinsic-intrinsic distinction is applied in a more uniform manner, and if investigators clearly define their use of the term, it will become easier to compare results and draw conclusions regarding the explanation of work behavior (p. 274).

Extrinsic rewards can undermine intrinsic motivation, presumably by shifting the perceived locus of causality from internal to external (Deci and Ryan, 2001; Teixeira et al., 2012). Moreover, motivated actions are those whose occurrence is not mediated by intentionality and people may be ineffective in regulating it, and therefore, its occurrence is thus experienced as impersonally caused (Deci and Ryan, 2001; Teixeira et al., 2012). Moreover, motivated actions are not a frequently found construct in the workplace, and therefore, are hard to find in actual work settings. On the contrary, Hofstede (1968) contends that intrinsic motivation is not reduced in the presence of performance-contingent extrinsic rewards; rather he suggests that intrinsic motivation is a necessary co-requisite for performance-contingent rewards to be motivating. Dermer (1975) argues that "In the majority of administrative settings, the allocation of extrinsic rewards based on performance is probably the preferred method" (p. 128).

Scholars continue to prefer intangible intrinsic rewards as opposed to extrinsic ones because people need to be self-managing so that they can tap into passions

and satisfaction that extrinsic rewards cannot offer (Thomas, 2000, Provitera, 2013). Therefore, as Deci and Ryan (1991) posit "The key to intrinsic motivation is mastery behaviors as we [people] strive to develop our interests and capacities." They argue that intrinsic motivation comes from self-determination, giving a full sense of choice, with the experience of doing what one wants, and without the feeling of coercion or compulsion. A person then, who is intrinsically motivated, spontaneously engages in an activity that interests them. Extrinsically motivated people, on the other hand, are coerced or seduced by externally administered consequences — the receipt of a reward or the avoidance of punishment (Deci and Ryan, 1991; Herlambang Cnossen & Taatgen, 2021).

Although significant research has been conducted on the intrinsic motivation concept (Ryan and Deci, 2000), nevertheless, no systematic empirical research had been undertaken to clarify the subjective phenomenology of intrinsically motivated activity (Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi, 2009, p. 89). Scholars posit that the heart of intrinsic motivation is that the motivation to succeed at a certain task does not come from the need to be compensated for actions with some type of tangible reward. Instead, motivation is inherent in the nature of life, and the only necessary rewarding consequences are the spontaneous effects and cognitions that accompany them (Deci & Ryan, 1991; Herlambang Cnossen and Taatgen, 2021).

The interesting component of intrinsic motivation is that the rewards for an intrinsically motivated activity are in the activity itself, and although that is true in the sense that there are no separate external rewards, people are still compensated for their effort and contribution at work. While the activity itself may be rewarding, without some form of compensation for the activity, intrinsic rewards may diminish in value (Provitera, 2013). Furthermore, scholars correctly point out that the rewarding consequence is inherent in the perception of people, not the activities (Berlyne, 1971). Deci and Ryan (1991) also conclude that consequences are feelings and thoughts that emerge spontaneously as people engage in the activity.

Csikszentmihalyi (1998) identified an intrinsic reward as "flow," which suggests that when activities are optimally challenging for a person's capacities, the person is likely to enjoy them and have an autotelic or "flow" experience. Deci and Ryan, (1991) found a similar tenet that intrinsically motivated behaviors are based on innate psychological needs; therefore, the individual's perceptual context of the reward is the inherent driver of the behavior. Based upon this review of the literature, several aspects of the extrinsic-intrinsic have not been delineated and there is a need for further research in this area of management and organizational behavior.

Further evidence from intrinsic motivation scholars posits that people's emotions may energize intrinsic rewards and make people feel good or excited about a task (Thomas & Tyman, 1993; Tyng et al., 2017). They offer a number of building blocks that can influence intrinsic rewards such as a clear purpose for choice, identifying passions for meaningfulness, having knowledge and skill recognition for competence, and the measurement of improvement for progress. They also developed four ways in which one can become more intrinsically motivated by using intrinsic motivational incentives to provide people with:

(1) A sense of meaningfulness, which provides an opportunity to pursue a worthy purpose,
(2) A sense of choice, which provides an opportunity to select task activities that make sense and seem appropriate,
(3) A sense of competence in the skillful accomplishment of performing task activities, and
(4) A sense of progress in the accomplishment of achieving the task purpose.

Furthermore, prior research has suggested that motivational processes could have either a positive or a negative effect on individual productivity and performance based on the rewards they receive for their efforts. The next section of this paper will develop a contingency model that identifies the intrinsic-extrinsic use of rewards and the possible impact on employee performance and productivity.

Contingency Factors of Intrinsic-Extrinsic Rewards in the Workplace

Based upon the background, positive scholarship literature, and extrinsic-intrinsic rewards sections of this paper, a contingency model is introduced to further investigate the relationship between extrinsic-intrinsic rewards and productivity in the workplace.

The paradox of motivation considers several facets of motivational processes that are both incentive – and intrinsically based. For example, Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory shows that triangular influences among the person, the environment, and behavior in the workplace do not necessarily imply symmetry in the strength of the bidirectional influences --present factors of each tenet does not mean that they all exert equal and simultaneous influence on motivation (p. 24). A further indication of the paradox of motivation has been posited by Pfeffer (1995) as the largely overlooked and strong presence of the human resource component of motivation. For example, people vary on how they perceive motivational influences in the form of rewards (i.e., intrinsic-extrinsic) based on the environment in which they work. The potential paradox here is that although the benefits from internally initiated, driven, and sustained rewards (i.e., intrinsic) are perceived as motivational, rewards initiated and controlled by an outside force (i.e., extrinsic), as a motivational process, may be more desirable to both individuals and organizations. Further evidence of this phenomenon has been indicative of the popular press suggesting that organizations cannot afford to ignore these outside forces such as extrinsic rewards (Jones, 2007, p. 10).

Scholars have found that extrinsic rewards play an important role in the form of incentives in the workplace. For example, the presence of extrinsic resources creates a buffer that scholars have conceptualized as being non-motivational over an extended period of time. However, Steve Kerr, former senior advisor and the first Chief Learning Officer to Goldman Sachs Corporation illustrated the popular motive for, and the method of the use of, extrinsic rewards:

> *Reward systems are not hatched overnight and require some experimentation. The first thing is to realize that you are <u>eligible</u> for any reward system that you create for yourself. Make the benefits <u>visible</u>, see them, touch them, smell them, hear them, and taste them... [...]. For maximum effectiveness, rewards must also be <u>timely</u>. Aim for prompt recognition since that strengthens the connection between performance and reward. Use*

reversibility and hold back rewards, if necessary (Kerr, 2008, p.4).

Moreover, Kerr (2008) adds that the presence of a reward system should shift in a way that reinforces the positive behavior of employees. In some cases, organizations that rely on incentives such as bonuses must continuously examine if this is an effective motivational process. Thus, motivational processes including intrinsic-extrinsic rewards must be evaluated based on employee performance.

Organizations provide many incentives in the form of intrinsic rewards. However, many firms are known as providers of bonus-type incentives in lieu of employee performance. For example, bonuses are typically in addition to a base salary, which can range from $100,000 to more than $1 million for top executives. Furthermore, roughly half of all the revenue generated at firms such as Goldman Sachs mentioned above, goes toward compensation, and most of it is paid in the form of a year-end bonus. For example, in 2012, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, and Citigroup set aside $92.49 billion to pay employees, down slightly from $92.81 billion in 2011, according to Alan Johnson, managing director of Johnson Associates, the privately held firm that conducted the survey (Craig, 2012). Although further investigation is necessary and Wall Street-type organizations are not indicative of all organizations, this finding adds significantly to the fact that extrinsic rewards are still sought after by some employees.

Pursuing motivational processes as an impetus to increase individual productivity and performance may be indicative of having a well-balanced delivery system of both extrinsic-intrinsic rewards. Managers

that can find a "Sweet Spot" of both extrinsic-intrinsic rewards create a situation in which individual motivation is more likely to be interpreted by the individual as an opportunity to perform better and, thus, reach higher productivity and performance levels.

Based on this prior research and contingent perspective, having effective reward systems also enables motivational processes to facilitate individual productivity and performance by serving as both a literal and psychological buffer against the potential negative impact of overcompensation based upon the use of extrinsic rewards. Because motivational processes involve the prospect of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as an obvious method to increase productivity and performance, relying on extrinsic rewards as the sole resource would reduce the impact of motivation on worker productivity. Thus, the following proposition concludes:

> **Proposition 1: For organizations with balanced (non-balanced) reward systems (i.e., using both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards), a shift to the use of extrinsic rewards as the sole motivational process will yield positive (negative) effects on individual productivity and performance.**

On the contrary, intrinsic reward availability allows organizations to take on new motivational processes without having to abandon the benefits of extrinsic rewards that are already working effectively. Taken together, organizations using motivational processes with a balance of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are better situated to experience facilitative effects of individual productivity and performance, whereas organizations without this flexibility in reward systems (i.e., those organizations relying heavily on intrinsic rewards) are

situated for less effective motivational processes. Therefore, the following proposition concludes:

> **Proposition 2: For organizations with balanced (non-balanced) reward systems (i.e., using both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards), a shift to the use of intrinsic rewards as the sole motivational process will yield positive (negative) effects on individual productivity and performance.**

In addition, because motivational processes involve the prospect of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as an obvious method to increase productivity and performance, relying on intrinsic rewards as the sole resource would reduce the impact of motivation on worker productivity. Accordingly, the following proposition concludes:

> **Proposition 3: For organizations with balanced (non-balanced) reward systems (i.e., using both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards), will yield positive (negative) effects on individual productivity and performance.**

These three propositions can be also summarized into the following umbrella proposition:

> **The Umbrella Proposition: The "Sweet Spot", as the right amount of extrinsic-intrinsic rewards, will yield positive effects on individual productivity and performance in the workplace.**

In the context of the organization and individual, as an example, when an employee effectively completes his/her task, he/she will then experience feelings of achievement, learning, personal growth, and satisfaction (i.e., intrinsic reward). Next, this intrinsic reward also inspires him/her to effectively complete the other tasks in order to re-experience the same feelings. On the other side, extrinsic rewards include financial compensation (such as bonuses) and non-monetary benefits (such as a surprise off-day). Herein, executives need to apply the right amount of extrinsic-intrinsic rewards (i.e. Sweet Spot) as a motivational process aimed at developing individual productivity in the company.

Neither of these rewards (extrinsic and intrinsic) is inherently worse or better than the other, but it can be seen that intrinsic rewards have more staying power (Manzoor et al., 2021). For example, if an employee is doing something for the good of his/her co-workers, it can be much more inspiring than getting financial bonuses or a surprise off-day. Herein, the "Sweet Spot", as the right amount of extrinsic-intrinsic rewards, is the intersection of the strengths and motivations of employees (Huskey et al., 2018; Duan et al., 2020). To find this spot, executives, first, need to identify what actually motivates employees to be successful (Vansteenkiste & Deci, 2003). Once they recognize these motivations, they should also identify employees' strengths. The following questions can be helpful to identify these strengths: What actually separates this employee from others? What is this employee very good at? Finally, they apply the right amount of extrinsic-intrinsic rewards to maximize individual productivity and performance in the workplace.

Discussion
Drawing upon a variety of theoretical perspectives, our primary purpose in this paper is to advance the understanding of exploratory individual productivity and performance by systematically investigating the effects of pursuing motivational processes.

In this section of the paper, we review the root causes of the motivational paradox and examine the possible contributions our work makes to the expanding body of positive organizational behavior literature. We also consider the reasons behind the common belief that motivational processes are simple and successful when careful analysis indicates that this may not be the case. Finally, we identify research opportunities that extend beyond the scope of this paper and highlight possible management implications.

Positive Organizational Behavior and the Motivational Paradox
As mentioned in the background section of this paper, psychological capital, and its sister term, positive organizational behavior (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007; Stephens, 2018), focus on the productivity and performance improvement of individuals. The criterion for positive organizational behavior is based upon enhancing what is appropriate for the individual. However, as was determined in the above sections of this paper, this is not always the case. Average performance may be tolerated which is contrary to reducing average performance to sustain a highly competitive work environment posited in the positive organizational behavior literature (i.e., Avolio and Luthans, 2006; Sutcliffe & Vogus, 2003; Shuffler et al., 2018).

One possible answer to this paradox is that we have tended to take a reactive rather than a proactive approach to both the scholarly research and practice perspectives of managing work performance (Luthans, 2002; Duchek, 2020). "We have concentrated too much on what is wrong with employees and managers, their dysfunctions and weaknesses (e.g., how to motivate inept employees, overcome resistance to change, cope with stress) rather than emphasize and build upon their strengths" (Luthans, 2002).

Going beyond prior thinking on motivational processes, which has not systematically considered the mechanisms of the motivational process, and has focused on presumed positive benefits to the individual, we examine the potential for motivational processes to either facilitate or weaken individual productivity and performance. We then proposed that facilitative or weakening effects are contingent on two core organizational factors: the sole application of extrinsic motivational rewards as opposed to both extrinsic-intrinsic rewards on individual productivity in the workplace (Proposition 1), and; the sole application of intrinsic motivational rewards as opposed to both intrinsic-extrinsic rewards on individual productivity in the workplace (Proposition 1) and; the application of both intrinsic-extrinsic as a motivational process to find a "Sweet Spot" for individual productivity in the workplace.

Our contribution to the management and organizational behavior literature contributes interdisciplinary insights at the intersection between positive organizational behavior grounded in Bandura's Social Learning Theory and Deci's work grounded in Self-determination Theory. Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio's research is indicative of intrinsic motivating factors. Deci, a scholar that primarily emphasizes the use of intrinsic rewards, considers the use of extrinsic rewards in some situations.

By focusing on theoretically grounded analysis, we hope to have provided some useful guidelines for managers to use in tailoring motivational processes to conditions most likely to lead to higher

levels of individual motivation, productivity, and performance.

Suggestions for Future Research
This paper provides indicative measurable propositions that may provide management implications when investigated. For instance, empirical tests of motivational process effects are proposed here as a testable theory suggesting that successful motivational processes exhibit predictable patterns of positive and negative effects contingent upon the use of intrinsic-extrinsic motivation, and these contingent factors also determine when organizations are more or less likely to implement motivational processes.

Empirical studies can also be implemented to investigate the capabilities of organizations to increase worker productivity in this context. Our propositions could be examined using several empirical approaches. For example, initial empirical pilot studies of motivational process effects could take the form of qualitative theory development. Another study could contract with a very large firm with multinational divisions encompassing varied degrees of the use of extrinsic-intrinsic motivational resources.

In addition, quantitative empirical studies could investigate the effects of the likelihood of using motivational processes incorporating a random sample of Fortune 500 firms using indicators of the use of intrinsic-extrinsic motivational resources. Further research could be carried out through an online questionnaire among organizations operating in various industries to collect empirical data. Importantly, the results may uncover the existing weaknesses, and provide useful and practical suggestions to overcome existing limitations of motivational processes. Empirical investigations could pre-suppose motivational process plans that incorporate the high use of intrinsic motivation reward programs and compare and contrast them to those doing the opposite (high use of extrinsic motivation reward programs). Finally, an empirical study can formulate a tenet offered in this paper as a "Sweet Spot" that incorporates the perfect combination of extrinsic-intrinsic rewards.

Conclusion
We investigated the organizational pursuit of motivational processes in practice and the effects of such processes on individual productivity and performance. Despite widespread interest in positive organizational behavior (i.e., intrinsic motivation) and its empirical framework providing a sustained competitive advantage, there are reasons to place limitations on motivational processes that attempt to increase individual productivity and performance. Although our propositions suggest ways in which motivational processes can be enhanced, we recognize that organizations may look for the last-ditch approach to survival and therefore rely more on incentives in the form of extrinsic rewards. Thus, our challenge is to conduct more practical empirical investigations that are timelier and more appropriate for management implications which may be more likely to be implemented. In effect, the paradox of motivation may have a lessening effect on individual productivity and performance; thus, be better understood.

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