

Criminal Justice Organizations

Administration and Management

Sixth Edition

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also explored by Hepburn (1985) and by Stojkovic (1987). Specific bases of socialized power were employed by both inmates and officers to complete their respective job assignments and tasks. For example, corrections officers considered the use of legitimate power—reasonable instructions and rules—a useful tool in motivating prisoners to do what is expected of them. In addition, the use of coercive power or force was not rated highly by corrections staff as a way of gaining compliance among prisoners. Power as a motivational tool has also been documented by research on corrections administrators (Stojkovic, 1986).

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory:

A rational theory of motivation that posits that a certain amount of work will result in a calculated outcome.

Expectancy theory, based on the belief that if a certain amount of effort is put forth, a calculated outcome will result, is a rational approach to motivation. This theory posits that police work, for example, relies on an expectation among police officers that their efforts will produce a reduction in crime. The individual officer's motivation to perform depends, in part, on reduced crime rates. From an idealistic perspective, rational activity on the part of the police officer should reduce crime and increase the officer's satisfaction.

We summarize the concepts of expectancy theory here (Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll, 1986:240). A basic concept is that performance equals motivation times ability. Performance is a function of the individual's ability to complete the task along with the motivation to do the task. More important, if neither motivation nor ability is present, then there will be no performance. Motivation and ability are related in a multiplicative fashion.

An *expectancy* is the likelihood that an event or outcome will occur. Expectancies take two forms. The first form is *effort-performance expectancies*, in which the person believes that a specific level of effort will result in a particular performance. The police officer, for example, may believe that a connection exists between the level of patrol activity and the crime rate in the precinct. In short, there is a correlation between the amount of work done and the end result, which in this example is the amount of crime in a specific area. The second form is *performance-outcome expectancies*, in which the person has an "expectation about the relationship between a particular level of performance and attaining certain outcomes" (Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll, 1986:243). In this form of expectancy, the police officer may believe that a relationship exists between activity and a positive evaluation from superiors that is ultimately expressed in some type of reward, such as a promotion. However, the relationship between police activity and crime rates is somewhat problematic. If, for example, there is a low probability that police activity will lead to an actual reduction in crime, then it is difficult to see how one can reward individual police officers to produce the desired performance—that is, reduced crime. In addition, if it is unlikely that the officer will gain any reward from the activity, he or she will not be motivated to do the activity. As a result, we would expect that the motivational levels of individual officers would be low because there is a low probability that their work activity produces the desired performance. Therefore, the individual officer may not choose

crime reduction as an outcome. More important, the officer may have a stronger desire for other outcomes, typically those that are attainable and rewarded consistently by the police organization.

Valences are the level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction produced by various outcomes. In brief, they are the individual's estimate of the advantages or disadvantages of a particular outcome. In the police example, if the effort required to produce a reduction in crime does not lead to a satisfactory level of reward from the organization, this activity has a low positive valence; it is not worth the effort to pursue the activity knowing the low level of reward attached to the effort.

Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll (1986:243-244) discuss how expectancy theory can be expanded to include other factors that affect the motivational level of employees. They argue that motivation is a function of expectancies and valences. Ability is a function of performance potential and organizational factors. Performance results from motivation and ability and leads to intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The level of performance affects the effort-performance expectancies. The rewards received for performance affect performance-outcome expectancies in later periods, and rewards also affect satisfaction.

Interpreting and applying this model to police officer motivation, we can say that first, the individual motivational levels of police officers are a function of what they expect and what valence they assign to their various activities. Second, the ability of an officer to do the job is a function of the officer's performance potential or the range of skills used in the achievement of objectives (Tosi, Rizzo, and Carroll, 1986:244). These skills may be limited by structural factors, such as job descriptions, policies, and technology. Arresting all known criminals, for example, would be impossible because of the limited resources of police organizations and the policies of the organization toward full enforcement of the law (Goldstein, 1990).

Third, when police activity leads toward some performance and that performance is a function of motivation and ability, then we would expect that a reward would follow. If an increase in arrest activity leads to an increase in pay or a promotion, then the officer receives an extrinsic reward for the performance. In addition, if arresting individuals provide the community with a safe environment and give the officer a good feeling about doing the job, the officer receives an intrinsic reward; this reward is typically self-administered by the individual. Many have suggested that a clearly identified reward structure within police departments is what is needed to properly motivate officers (Gaines, Tubergen, and Paiva, 1984:265-275). However, others have argued quite persuasively that these rewards are few and far between and are limited by the structure of many police departments. Conser (1979:286) contends that motivation is difficult in police organizations because the opportunities for advancement and promotion are limited. He recommends a number of mechanisms that would raise the motivational levels of officers, including merit pay packages, extra vacation leaves, and extra pay for education. Nevertheless, some research suggests that extrinsic rewards, such as increased pay and promotion, are only a small part of the motivation of police officers. Intrinsic rewards, such as achievement (Baker, 1976), are just as valuable. More important, it seems clear that proper motivation of specific officers requires a multitude of management strategies.

Fourth, when an officer perceives that a level of performance will consistently produce a similar positive outcome from the organization, such as a reward, this perception will affect future expectancies; this process is nothing but learning by the officer and reinforcement by the organization through the reward structure. As the police officer learns that ticket writing, for example, is positively rewarded by the organization, the officer will continue to perform the activity until rewards are discontinued by the organization. In effect, the performance expectancy is a function of reinforcement and feedback by the organization (Stoller, 1977:57).

Finally, if the police officer is consistently rewarded, both extrinsically and intrinsically, then we can say that he or she has a high level of satisfaction with the organization. Conversely, if the police officer is not receiving rewards, then we can expect that dissatisfaction is high and will continue to stay at this level until modifications are made. Criminal justice managers need to be aware of and sensitive to the level of dissatisfaction if organizational objectives are to be met (Witham, 1980:10–11).

In an attempt to apply expectancy theory to policing, DeJong, Mastrofski, and Parks (2001) tested it as an explanation for variation in police office problem solving. The researchers found that the theory did well in explaining what types of officers engaged in more problem solving. In particular, this research noted that there was a clear difference between officers who were more “traditional” in their orientation when compared to officers who were community policing oriented on the dimension of problem solving. The latter type of officer was motivated by recognition that the work performed (problem solving) was valued by the police organization. By granting a community policing assignment to an officer, the department was providing great recognition, and this, in turn, allowed the officer to creatively address problems on the beat. The key determinant is the degree to which officers are granted autonomy to make decisions regarding problem selection and solution. For traditionally structured criminal justice organizations, such autonomy is problematic.

How does increased autonomy impact employee behavior such that levels of commitment and motivation stay high and are in concordance with organizational goals? The answer to this question raises not only a concern regarding employee motivation but also issues of job design, supervision, and leadership. For now, we can say that there is support for expectancy theory in the criminal justice literature, but as noted by DeJong, Mastrofski, and Parks (2001:60), more research is needed before a definitive position on expectancy theory and its application to criminal justice employee motivation can be made.

Equity theory: A theory of motivation that is based on perceived fairness among employees regarding treatment in the workplace.

Equity Theory

Equity theory holds that an individual's motivation level is affected by her or his perception of fairness in the workplace and that individual motivation must be understood in relation to how other employees are treated by management and the organization. Equity theory stresses the importance of fairness in the organization and how employees perceive its application in the workforce. In