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Three most pressing issues in Organizational Behaviour and the practices that might be implemented

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Abstract: Organization behaviour is the study of behaviour and attitude of people in an organization. After all human behaviours and attitude determine effectiveness of any organization. The approach used in studying OB is the system approach. In other words this approach interprets people organization relationship in terms of the whole person, whole organization, whole social system, and whole group. Its purpose is to build better relationships by archiving human objectives. In this paper we propose to study motivation, organization conflict and leadership, as among the most pressing issue in organizational behaviour. Further, we shall discuss how this issue can be addressed.

I. CRITICAL ROLE OF MOTIVATION

It is critical for manager to understand why and how employees are motivated if they are to make full use of a worker's capacity to learn and perform at their best is a complex and difficult challenge. No two or more individuals, that is, no two employees including the two who are doing the same job are like. At any time two different individuals will have two distinct needs and desires. What motivates an employee to perform well today may not motivate him in the next year, or next week or even next hour. However, a motivated set of employee represent their promise. When employee are motivated their performance, learning, and satisfaction can improve dramatically from which everyone including the organization benefits.

Douglas McGregor in 1960 saw the merit in the relationship between motivation and behaviour. According to him, managers motivate employees by one of the two basic approaches, which he termed Theory X and Theory Y. Theory X is the traditional view which suggests that managers must coerce, force, and threaten the employees in order to motivate them. The alternative philosophy of human nature believes that human beings are responsible by nature. They need not be coerced or controlled by the managers to get the best out of them. While some experts consider McGregor's work as a basic theory of motivation, others feel it is a philosophy of human nature that is more suited to explain leadership rather than basic motivation theories.

However, it must be acknowledged that Taylor's theory radically altered the sphere of organized work. The work could now be measured and systematized. It could be expressed and evaluated in more scientific terms. A Taylor-McGregor contrast dichotomizes engineering and psychological motivation approaches. "Political theorist Sheldon Wolin turns this bisection into a battle call: 'The modern manager...must in defence of "human values" stand ready to resist the changes proposed by the "logicians" of industrial engineering.' Proscribed are work measurement, pay-for-performance, and standardization. Lauded are psychologically oriented attempts to make work place participation more attractive".

In contemporary Public Administration text books, Taylor appears as an ideal typical management engineer who views workers as machines and reduces all motivation to money. They allude to his man as machine conceptualization with disconcerting moral overtones. His theory focuses on economic man that fails to recognize other aspects of human personality having needs, preferences, attitudes, and commitments. Taylor in contrast to Elton Mayo and other Hawthorne researchers failed to appreciate that social needs can undercut the appeal to economic rewards. The contrast between scientific management

of Taylor and the theory of McGregor is even starker. Mc Gregor may be said to have understood the human needs with greater insights just like Maslow, who posited a hierarchy of five human needs – physical, security, social, esteem, and self-actualization. In contrast to McGregor, Taylor is made to appear reductionist. This comparison is akin to the natural science scholarship model where early theory is seen more primitive than later thoughts

Taylor set forth his theory in two books (1903 and 1911) and a large number of articles. Many of his applications, according to John B. Miner (2001) have not met the test of time. One that has survived involves breaking down of movements into their component parts and prescribing methods for their execution. It has prospered today in the form of what is known as ‘Industrial Engineering’. “Although time and motion study can be traced to well before Taylor, he and those who worked with him perfected the approach and sold it to the world (Reeves, Duncan and Ginter 2001)” (Miner 127). Taylor’s thoughts were rooted in an industrial era characterized by mass production that relied on an assembly-line approach to manufacturing. In such a system of mass production, efficiency was gained through specialization where each worker focused on a single task. Mc Gregor’s model is quite relevant in business approach today. However, it is doubtful if the model can be successfully used to tap creativity among the work force. “...corporate leaders emerging from today’s business schools have been encouraged to value McGregor’s theory Y management approach – employees want and need to excel and in the right organizational climate will do so. But despite theory Y, hierarchical, paternalistic attitudes still permeate many businesses of every size today. Management’s approach continues to be that position equals knowledge and intelligence and power, that the higher the position the better the ideas, that only someone with formal authority can responsibly handle decisions. The effect of this management approach is to reduce the creative power of a 3000 person in organization to the 10 leaders, a power reduction 30 to 1. The concept of organization climate (distinct but related to organizational culture) might help us evaluate theory X and Y. Organizational climate, based on individual’s attitude measures whether or not expectations, what is it like to work in an agency, are met. Theory X and theory Y are expressions of different organizational cultures.

Theory X presumes employees as inherently lazy leads to attitudes and behaviours favouring tight control. Theory Y presumes employees positively disposed to work and personal growth generates attitudes and behaviours favouring autonomy and self direction. Climate relates to the measure of employee acceptance of the prevailing theory X culture. If many employees enter in the organization with theory Y value, a climate problem is likely to develop because employees do not share the dominant organizational culture values.

II. ROLE OF LEADERSHIP

“Leadership means the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of set of goals.” Leadership is the backbone of any organization. The organizational success and its smooth functioning depend to a large extent on the quality of leader(s) in an organization. Leaders can motivate the work force, meet organizational challenges, bring about effective transition that may be required in the organization, and successfully meet organizational goals. According to Fulop and Linstead (1999) leadership was the single most important factor in motivating employees and improving productivity.

Early research on leadership focused on individual characteristics that equated successful leadership with appearance. However, this approach was abandoned for lack of consistency and traits or personality characteristics became more prominent. A number of traits and competencies associated with leadership include determination, confidence, persistence, innovativeness, ability to take risk, integrity, readiness to face uncertainty, among others.

Bennis and Nanus (1985, p. 259) maintain that “neither in common parlance nor in the literature on the subject, is there consensus about the essence of leadership, or the means by which it can be identified, achieved or measured”. Leadership remains an elusive subject despite a large body of research from trait models (based on the traits and other characteristics of leaders) to behavioral perspectives (notably the Ohio and Michigan studies), to contingency theories (Vroom & Yetton 1973; and Vroom & Jago 1988). The latest research focus on leadership is the transactional versus transformational leadership models.

Emotional intelligence has been recognized in recent years as a great trait that allows leaders to work well with people. It is universally acknowledged as a great gift and competency that not everyone possesses. No doubt, considered 'soft' skills, these can bring about significant work place efficiency and effectiveness for both leaders in employees cross-culturally.

As against the theories based on assumption of inherent leadership traits, behavioural theories of leadership are based on what leaders actually do. If success can be defined in terms of describable action then it should be easy for the others to act in the same way.

There is not one style of leadership that can be applied to address organizational behaviour issues. As for instance, a Participative Leader, rather than taking autocratic decisions, seeks to involve other people in the process. When subordinates, peers, superiors and other stakeholders participate in the decision making the outcome is more likely to be satisfying to all. Most participative activity take place within immediate team since managers give or deny control to subordinates. This approach is also known as consultation, empowerment, joint decision-making, democratic leadership, Management by Objective (MBO) and power-sharing, for the obvious reason (changingminds.org).

A successful leader is the one who can adapt to the demands of different situations. Situational decisions depend on factors like motivation and capability of followers that are in consequence dependent on factors within the particular situation. Another factor that affects leader behaviour is the relationship between followers and the leader that affects leader behaviour as much as it does follower behaviour. How the leader perceives a situation rather than the truth of the situation, apart from other factors such as stress and mood will impact a leader's behaviour.

Tannenbaum and Schmidt (1958) identified three forces that led to the leader's action: the forces in the situation, the forces in the follower and also forces in the leader. Maier (1963) noted that leaders are as much concerned about the likelihood of a follower accepting a suggestion, as about the overall importance of getting things done. This concern might in certain critical circumstances force a leader to be directive in style so as to avoid the implications of failure.

The organizations today are in the process of change. The economic relationships across the world are changing rapidly. The process of global organizational transformation has led to research into effective leadership in relation to change (Paglis & Green, 2002). The imperative need of transformational leadership is evident in the change that is considered essential to business growth and development. A transformational leadership is therefore essential when the transforming company has the visions of a big picture ahead that must be attained.

Transformational leadership is today among the most popular leaderships commented upon. In contrast transactional leadership is based on the notion of effectively managing the day to day tasks. Transformational vs. transactional leadership should be seen as meeting the relevant organizational goals in two differing circumstances rather than the opposite styles of leadership. Once the transformation takes place, the organization needs status quo, when the transactional leadership takes place. On the issue of internal competencies of leadership, it is notable that transformational leadership may disregard it even as it is considered significant to leadership success. While a great transformational leader, may never uproot a structure and reorder work processes, for instance, but their vision may be replaced by a pragmatic managing of the company (Mumford & Doorn 2001). In other words, a leadership might not always lead to transformation, but what is more important, it can communicate and solve problems and ultimately lead people through already grounded processes and structure.

III. CONFLICT WITHIN ORGANIZATION

When two or more individual comes together for archiving common organizational goal or objective it means group and there is a group, conflict arise between group member because of individual thinking, leadership, poor communication between group members, work allocation, task etc.. Conflict within an organization is not unnatural. However, if the conflict arrives within an organization, or occurs frequently, it is an indication of serious anomie within the organization that must be addressed.

The most crucial issue facing any organization is conflict. While conflict is not unexpected in an organization, there are appropriate conflict- handling mechanisms. They are depicted as under:

Conflict and Organizational Behaviour,

Competing

1. When quick, vital decisions/actions needed in emergencies
2. Important issues requiring unpopular actions such as cost cutting, discipline etc.
3. On issues more vital to organizational welfare when you know you are right
4. Against people who take advantage of non-competitive situation.

Collaborating

1. To find an interrelated solution when both sets of concerns are too important to compromise.
2. When your objective is to learn
3. To merge insights from people with different perspectives.
4. To gain commitment by incorporating concerns into a consensus
5. To work through feelings those have interfered with a relationship.

Compromising

1. When goals are too important but not worth the effort or potential disruption of more assertive modes.
2. When opponents with equal power are committed to mutually exclusive goals.
3. To achieve temporary settlement of complex issues.
4. To arrive at expedient solutions under time pressures.
5. As a backup when collaboration or competition is unsuccessful.

Avoiding

1. When an issue is trivial or more important issues are pressing.
2. When you perceive no chance of satisfying your concerns.
3. When potential disruption outweighs the benefits of resolution.
4. To let people cool down and regain perspective
5. When gathering information superseded an immediate decision.
6. When others can resolve the conflict more effectively
7. When issues seem tangential or symptomatic of other issues.

Accommodating

1. When find you are wrong – to allow a better position to be heard, to learn, to show your acceptable.
2. When issues are occur more important to others than to yourself – to satisfy others and maintain cooperation.
3. To build social credits for issues will in organization.
4. To minimize a loss when you are outmatched and losing.

5. When harmony and stability are especially important.
6. To allow all subordinates to develop by learning from mistakes.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study of Organizational Behaviour deals with attitudes and behaviour of people within an organization with a systemic approach. Behaviours and interactions people within an organization may be either functional or dysfunctional. There are certain crucial issues within every organization which, if left unaddressed emerge as organizational threats. The three issues we have identified in this essay are leadership, conflict and motivation. Motivation is essential because unmotivated person in organization leads to reduction in efforts, and therefore productivity, while on the other hand a motivated work force is to every one's advantage. Leadership can be of different, and there is no fixed formula for leadership style that may be suitable for every organization. Different styles of leadership may be required by leader for different organizational goals at different times. Conflict resolution is critical for the survival of an organization. Different conflict resolution modes lead to different outcomes. Therefore, it is essential to identify the goals and objective sought through conflict resolution.

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