

HS-305 - **Human Resource Management**
HANDOUT #2: The Social System Model
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The Social System Model :

Primarily as a reaction to the rational system model as well as the observation that human behaviour is difficult to control and regulate, a new movement, commonly known as the human relations movement, emerged. It focused on those aspects of organizational behaviour which were of no or little concern to the rational system model. Elton Mayo was the father of this movement. Subsequently, several persons, notably Kurt Lewin, and more recently, D. McGregor and A. Maslow were identified with this movement.

Hawthorne Studies :

A series of experiments were conducted at the Western Electric Company's Hawthorne plant in Chicago, for about 12 years from 1927. Initially the purpose was to observe the effect of working conditions on job performance. Later, when it became apparent that work performance is affected by factors outside the job, various controlled experiments were performed.

Results of experiments indicated that while working in the group, workers develop a norm of a proper day's work and continue to perform at that level even when conditions are not very conducive. It was noticed that deviations from the norm was not very positively viewed by other workers. The rate busters (those who produced more than agreed) and rate chisellers (those who did not produce as much as agreed) were neither favoured nor appreciated by the group members. In the group was a cohesive one, rate busters were controlled by disapproval and sometimes by physical attack by other members, while rate chisellers were helped to maintain the quota for the day.

Motivation to Work :

Work has different connotations for different people. However, all agree that work has an intrinsic meaning and provides satisfaction to non-job-related motives also. Among the early exponents of motivation, Maslow's (1954) Need Hierarchy theory is of special significance. He suggested a simple five-fold hierarchy of needs:

1. Physiological For maintaining body processes. Examples are food and water.
2. Safety To avoid external danger or anything that can harm the person.
3. Social To be given love, affection and nurturance by another person or persons.
4. Ego To be valued, accepted and appreciated as a person, to achieve status and acquire recognition and attention.
5. Self actualization For self-fulfillment

If the person has satisfied his basic needs somewhat, he makes an effort to satisfy the higher-

order needs. However this hierarchy of needs, which talks of a progression of needs, is not rigid, but that a satisfied need does not serve as a motivator is indisputable.

Another conceptual framework of motivation is McGregor's (1960) theory X and theory Y. Theory X is based on the following assumptions.

1. "The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if he can."
2. "Because of this human characteristics of dislike of work, most people must be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort towards the achievement of organizational objectives."
3. "The average human being prefers to be directed wishes to avoid responsibility, has relatively little ambition, and wants security above all."

On the other hand, theory Y puts the burden of motivation on the organization and suggests that human nature is different from what theory X suggests. There are six major assumptions, some of which contradict those of theory X and some additional ones:

1. "The expenditure of physical or mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest."
2. "External control and the threat of punishment are not the only means for bringing about efforts towards organizational objectives. Man will exercise self direction and self control in the service of the objectives to which he is committed."
3. "Commitment to objective is a function to the rewards associated with their achievement."
4. "The average human being learns under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility."
5. "Capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity in the solution of organizational problem is widely, not narrowly, distributed in the population."
6. "Under the conditions of modern industrial life the intellectual potentialities of the average human being are only partially utilized."

Definition of Personnel Management/Human Resource Management

It is advisable to have some formal definition of subject, which we are planning to deal. Personnel management has been defined in terms of "planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of the procurement, development, compensation, integration, maintenance, and separation of human resources to the end that individual, organizational, and societal objectives are accomplished."